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TWO ANGELS.

BY MARY CLEMMER.

Two glorious angels were at Nature's birth,
  The one all light, with happy, radiant mien:
The other with her eyes upon the earth
  In steady gaze—both thoughtful and serene.
The one was Hope!—to work with ceaseless good,
  The budding wish—the soul-concentred will;
The other Patience—calming fiery blood,
  Teaching to wait—"to suffer and be still."

And be ye ever with us, angels twain!
  Oh thou with thy glad eyes and brilliant face!
And thou, still calmest in the hour of pain—
  Who gildest sorrow with a holy grace!
Give us thy inspiration, smiling Hope!
  Courage to work the good we may conceive.
Sweet Patience, reach us how with grief to cope,
  To struggle on—to fail, and yet believe.

Almost Sacrificed.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA GRAHAM," "TWICE MARRIED," "MABEL MAY," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER II.—[CONTINUED.]

"CONSTANCE, it appears to me that you are loving and indulgent to every one but your husband and those he likes and pities.

"I trust I am not right in thinking that you have pined ever since Alwynne Compton left us.

"You pitied his father, even though you professed not to love him.

"I hope you are not cherishing a remembrance of the lover of your girlhood in your strange affection for his son."

Constance was very white, but she did not attempt to return the bitter taunt. She only said, with a struggle to maintain her composure—

"Howard, Heaven knows that I have ever been to you a good, true, and loving wife; and, if I do feel a peculiar interest in poor Alwynne, as the son of my childhood's playmate and dear friend, is it wrong? Is it unnatural?"

"Wrong?

"Well, I don't know.

"But these childish friendships and affections are very stupid things, and I am glad the boy went before Clara had time to form one that might have been inconvenient to her future husband."

He spoke angily and bitterly; but Howard Nugent's nature was not a harsh one, and he dosted at heart on his fair, sweet wife. The calm, pale face won on him in spite of feelings and temper poisoned and irritated by hidden and artful insinuations. Who could look on Constance Nugent and doubt her truth and purity?

He held out his hand.

"Come, Constance, I was cross and unjust.

"Forgive me.

"I love you so much that I am jealous of the dead, you see.

"Let it pass now, and come with me to the dining-room. It does not look well for you thus to seclude yourself from me and your guests."

The gentleman had not the candor to confess that this was the first time Constance had committed this breach of etiquette, and the lady was too glad to recognize the love and sunshine returning to his heart to notice her husband's acerbity.

She rose with an effort which she herself could scarcely understand, and, taking his arm, accompanied him, as he wished, to the dining-room.

"Why, Constance, you look charming!" observed Mrs. Le Grande, as she entered. "I never saw a more lovely bloom even on your cheek; did you, Eleanor?"

"No, I think Mrs. Nugent must have been drinking wine in private," laughed Eleanor, "and therefore can't stoop to our sublunary fare."

Mr. Nugent frowned slightly.

Mrs. Le Grande gave her daughter a warning look.

It was true.

Mrs. Nugent looked singularly lovely today; her clear skin was relieved by a soft, yet brilliant coloring that looked almost unearthly in its bright delicacy; her eyes were glittering like stars beneath the long lashes; her whole face was lovely as an angel's.

She tried to eat, but it was only a vain pretence.

Mr. Nugent either wilfully or really did not appear to notice the circumstance; and Mrs. Le Grande and Eleanor followed his lead, and supplied any lack of vivacity in the conversation by their own lively dialogue.

At last the weary meal was over.

Constance rose to leave the room; she walked to the door, grasped the handle, and then stood as if holding by it, without the power to open the door.

The others were looking from the window at the gathering clouds.

"I rather doubt whether we shall go out after all, Constance," remarked Mrs. Le Grande, turning to her cousin.

A cry escaped her, for even as she looked Constance was tottering, and the support she had in the massive handle appeared to be failing her.

Mr. Nugent's attention was directed by Mrs. Le Grande's eager eyes.

He sprang to his wife's side just in time to receive a lifeless form in his arms.

Mrs. Nugent had at last succumbed to a disease that had never been absolutely declared, though long suspected by herself and her physicians—that disease which mentally and physically kills so many of earth's sons and daughters—a broken heart.

* * * * * *

Terrible days and weeks succeeded the bereavement of the husband and father, and a year passed slowly on in its dull wretchedness.

Mrs. Le Grande and Eleanor had remained at the deserted, lonely mansion, the sole comfort of the father, the bitterest and yet hidden, irritating grief of the child.

Yet who could fail to blame the unreason of Clara's dislike to so kind and loving and considerate a friend as Mrs. Le Grande, and so sister-like and charming a companion as Eleanor was presumed and pronounced to be by all?

All but Clara and Mrs. Selwyn—good, kind, and, unhappy, fast-declining Mrs. Selwyn.

As the month rolled on, servants and friends and acquaintances began to whisper that the widower was not unassailable—that the fair, sweet lady of Temple Nugent was almost forgotten, and that the stronger, bolder, more dashing widow of the late doctor had fully supplied her place to the husband.

There appeared to be grounds for the report.

Mrs. Le Grande was frequently seen walking over the large domain, visiting distant parts of the estate, giving her opinion as to alterations and improvements in which Mrs. Nugent had had neither the heart nor the inclination to interfere.

She certainly was useful to the spiritless and languid widower in reading letters, copying papers, seeing persons on troublesome business, and in every way cheering him and sparing him trouble and vexation—in short she was his "right hand" in everything.

Constance had never aspired to this.

Perhaps her health had been too feeble; perhaps she had deemed it more especially her husband's place to manage and arrange his own affairs.

In any case it was a novelty to Mr. Nugent, and a novelty that appeared aggreable to him.

Then Eleanor acted as governess to the young Clara. It was Mrs. Le Grande's proposal.

"It will be a beginning for Eleanor," she said; "and, besides, you could not bear a stranger in the house, nor could Clara. When we are gone, you will of course make other arrangements."

What entire disinterestedness! Who could doubt so charming a woman. No wonder that Mr. Nugent became dependent on her—no wonder that the widower and his clever, useful guest were seldom seen apart.

And thus twelve or fourteen months passed after the death of Constance Nugent.

It was a cold, bleak November day—a day that depressed the spirits, and made every trouble and every grievance more dreary and more wretched.

Mr. Nugent was alone in his library—a rare occurrence with him now.

He could scarcely account for it.

Mrs. Le Grande generally came to him immediately after her interview with the housekeeper, and the letters and her advent were usually identical in point of time.

But on this day, when of all others he most required her company and her services, some unaccountable freak or difficulty kept her away.

He had unusually pressing and troublesome business letters for her to read, and yet she was not there.

It was provoking in any case, and Mr. Nugent's temper had become somewhat irritable of late.

At last he could bear it no longer. He rang the bell furiously.

"Mrs. Le Grande—where is she?" he asked.

"I don't know; shall I inquire?"

"Certainly.

"Tell her that I wish to see her—that is as soon as she can conveniently come," he added.

The man disappeared, but returned in a few moments.

"Mrs. Le Grande will be with you in a quarter of an hour, sir." And he again left the room. In about the stipulated time the lady appeared.

Her eyes were red with weeping, and her face wore an expression of unusual gravity which could not fail to attract Mr. Nugent's notice.

"What is it—what has happened?" he inquired hastily.

"Is Eleanor—but no—what can be the matter, my dear lady?"

"Not much in the world's eyes perhaps—only a hastening of what must have taken place sooner or later," she said, gently. "I am compelled to do at once what I thought might have been done a little later.

"And what is that?"

"Simply take my departure from Temple Nugent—that is all."

"Departure!" exclaimed Mr. Nugent, and his voice trembled. "It is a bad jest, Margaret."

"It is no jest, but sober, solemn earnest," she said softly.

"In plain English, my dear sir, myself and daughter have stayed too long, and I am now rudely awakened to the fact."

"Awakened! Who has dared to express this opinion?

"Surely not one of the servants—surely not Clara?"

And a flush of anger came over his face at the thought.

"No, my dear sir, no. Your domestics have copied your own tone to the widow and the orphan: and as for Clara, she, poor child, is buried still in the past, and thinks little of the present. I confess that one of my great regrets and anxieties in leaving will be for her."

"And not for me?" said the gentleman, coloring.

The tone might have befitted a young lover, and the blush on Mrs. Le Grande's face would not have ill-graced her daughter's.

"No, of course—it is so different. You are a man—independent, strong, free to go and come, and choose your course at pleasure. Poor little Clara needs care and guardianship."

"And yet you would leave her."

"I must," was the calm reply.

"But why?"

Mrs. Le Grande colored again most becomingly.

"I cannot tell you. It is sufficient that it has been made a necessity for me, and that even you, as my friend, cannot wish me to remain."

"At least, as your nearest connection, your true and sincere friend, I have a right to know why; and I do insist on knowing why you are going to leave this roof, where you are very happy, honored, protected, and ——"

He stopped.

Mrs. Le Grande's ears had been decidedly open, though her eyes were cast on the ground.

But the last words, whatever, they were intended to be, did not come.

She was compelled to reply.

"It is very painful, Mr. Nugent. I must either appear ungrateful and inconsiderate, or else forfeit a woman's delicacy in some measure.

"Still, I am one who rather regards the rigid propriety of the matter, and I will therefore speak plainly.

"I have this morning received a letter from a distant connection, and, I believe, a true friend, informing me that injurious rumors are rife about me, and that I can only vindicate my own and Eleanor's character by leaving your house at once and for ever."

"Wretched slanderers!" exclaimed Mr. Nugent, fiercely.

"How dare they interfere with one so completely beyond suspicion—with a household which should defy the most envious tongues!

"Margaret, it is idle calumny. Disregard it—live it down."

She shook her head.

"It cannot be, Mr. Nugent. I have decided, and nothing can change my resolve. I shall go next week, or even sooner, if my preparations can be completed. Mrs. Selwyn is quite competent to take charge of Clara till you can find a governess for her. I might disregard myself, but Eleanor's good name depends on her mother's and I have no choice."

Mr. Nugent did not reply for a minute or two.

He had fallen into deep thought.

Scarcely did he seem to comprehend the last words of his companion, and Mrs. Le Grande could not read the grave, doubtful look on his face; yet there was a key to the changing expression.

The inner man was undergoing a struggle—a struggle which lay between inclination and duty, between the past and the present.

The lady grew weary of the suspense.

She made a slight, a very slight rustle with her dress.

She would have risen to go had she dared.

But to hasten the decision might have been to alter its character, and she remained still in the chair she had taken while the fit of thought went on. At last he roused himself, and gave a kind of inward gulp, as if swallowing the rising doubts and fears and anxieties, that interfered with his final resolve.

He drew his chair somewhat nearer to hers.

There was a little hesitation in his manner, but it vanished soon after the first few words.

"Margaret, stay."

"I cannot."

"Have you any other reason for wishing to leave us than the one you have given?"

"Certainly not.

"How could I?" she said, with admirable caution.

"Have I not every motive that can be imagined to bind me to the spot where my duty and my pleasure have been found for so many previous months?"

He was answered.

The tearful eyes, the trembling voice were answer enough.

He hastily replied.

"Then, if that is the case, it gives me courage to say what is in my power Margaret. I ask you to stay with me—to fill the place that has been so well supplied by you since the terrible bereavement that left me destitute.

"I ask you to be the same friend, comforter, help that you have been to me; I ask you to be the same guardian and mother to my Clara—but under a different name. As my wife no ill word can be spoken of you; and as my wife I ask you to remain at Temple Nugent.

"I do not speak as a foolish boy or would-be lover.

"You and I have both had silent ties, other affections; we have each a child, dearest of all living beings to us; but still we can give to each other the true regard, the dependence, and the happiness which may make the remainder of our lives peaceful and contented.

"Say it cordially, openly, without affectation, Margaret—Yes or no? I have been frank with you—do you imitate my example."

The lady paused for a few minutes. But it was but a decorous pause—she certainly had had scant leisure to debate or consider the matter very deeply during the five brief resolutions of the second-hand on the bronze timepiece.

"I will," she said at last.

"Howard Nugent, I will imitate your frankness. I will endeavour to make you happy, and to be a mother to your Clara; though, alas! we can never cease to mourn sweet Constance."

Mr. Nugent took her hand in his.

"But at least you feel you can give me the affection of a wife, Margaret?"

"I never wondered that Constance was happy," she answered, smiling. "Just now that is all I will say. You would not believe or approve of more; and so I shall leave you for the present. In spite of my eight-and-thirty years, my heart is still girlish enough to be easily agitated, and I confess you have moved me more deeply than I could have believed."

And the lady left the room in spite of the evident disappointment of her newly betrothed husband.

CHAPTER III.

THE wedding of forty-two and thirty-eight, from the circumstances of the case, was unusually private and quiet. Only Eleanor acted as bridesmaid in the little quiet church in Wales where the pair were united; and the lawyer who had been the friend as well as advisor of Mr. Nugent's family for many a long year gave away the bride.

Clara was not there.

The child had quietly but firmly refused to go, or to be in any way accessory to the union.

Mr. Nugent had informed her himself, in a few brief, decided words, forestalling any outburst or remonstrance on her part by telling her that it must be, and that it was for her sake as well as his own that he was taking the step in question.

"You cannot have a kinder or more affectionate step-mother than the one who knows I loved your own dear mother, my Clara.

"Your future interests are safe, since you are the undisputed heiress of Temple Nugent, the chief part of my property, and your mother's fortune. I have therefore felt free to gratify my own wishes, and look to your safety and comfort, by securing to you such a protector."

Clara listened with burning cheeks and a heart that beat almost too violently for her to speak; but she saw her father preparing to go, and she gasped out just two words.

"One year—oh, papa!"

Such an appeal was more forcible than the most violent outburst. Mr. Nugent colored.

"It was necessary, Clara, for reasons that you are too young to understand at present; be satisfied that your father has acted for the best, and trust him.

"I have a right to expect obedience from my only child," and he turned hastily away and left her.

Clara remained motionless for some minutes, fixed and rigid as stone, then she sank gradually back on the the sofa. She had fainted.

Mrs. Selwyn found her thus some ten minutes after Mr. Nugent had left the room.

"Poor lamb, they'll be content when they have killed mother and child!" she muttered.

"And Master Alwynne doesn't write, or at least the letters don't come, and she's got no friend but me; and I sha'n't be with her long.

"Heaven help you, my pretty one!"

And amid tears and prayers Mrs. Selwyn proceeded to the task of restoration.

From that day Clara Nugent never uttered a word of remonstrance or complaint; but her demeanor towards the step-mother elect and her future sister was simply calm, contemptuous civility, more cutting than words.

Not a caress, not a kind word would she receive to bestow; but yet even Mr. Nugent could not quarrel with her reception of the new regime.

"When papa orders, I must obey; mamma said so," she remarked to Mrs. Selwyn on one occasion.

"I must do as mamma and Alwynne wished, but for the others, nothing." And the eyes flashed so, and the lips formed into a smile of such proud contempt, that even Mrs. Selwyn was awed.

"She's a Nugent—that she is," was the woman's comment.

"I wish Mr. Alwynne would come back. Heaven help the child! She'll be ruined, if she isn't killed outright.

"She's got such a spirit, and, what's more she's not got the strength to bear it. Oh dear, it's a bad business—a bad business! I wish the poor old doctor had lived, or that that woman had never seen the inside of Temple Nugent."

And the good creature went her way with this fervent aspiration on her lips and in her heart.

* * * * * *

And this marriage, was it a happy one? Did Margaret Nugent fulfil the plans and hopes which Margaret Le Grande had held out?

Time was not granted to decide the point.

Joy and woe, joy and woe,
So our earthly moments go.

Such was the experience of the family at Temple Nugent.

To Clara all was woe indeed, but to Margaret Le Grande and her daughter all for the present was joy—joy to the portionless widow and daughter now safely established in the wealthy and luxurious home of Temple Nugent—joy, since the death of the kindly owner had placed that domain in the power of the new made wife.

It seemed as if the fates were against Clara.

Had Howard Nugent lived for some few years after his marriage, it is doubtful if his testament would have been shaped as it was.

Even had he died one brief month before the day that witnessed the bridal at the little Welsh church, he would have left a far different will in respect of the management and disposition of his child and her large heritage.

But it was not so to be.

A severe cold, resulting in inflammation, carried off Howard Nugent during the first cold winds of the October subsequent to his marriage.

And his testament, when read in the usual solemn form before the weeping widow and the cold, pale, tearless daughter of the deceased, amounted to a temporary abandonment of the young Clara to the care and tenderness of her step-mother.

The will was in this guise and shape.

Temple Nugent was settled, long before the birth of any children to its owner, on the eldest child of the union, should that child be a boy, or on the first son, if there were any born subsequently, if the first child should prove a daughter; but, failing male issue, the estate was to descend to the daughter, if any, in such union.

There was no alternative for testator but to leave the property and the large income attached to it as intended by his own father and grandfather; in addition, there was a very ample personal fortune to be disposed of, and Mr. Nugent had changed the disposition of that fortune more than once, even after his marriage.

This last circumstance might have served as a thermometer to gauge the happiness and trust of Howard Nugent's life with Margaret Le Grande.

The marriage settlement on her had been five hundred a year for her life, legacy of five thousand to Eleanor, to be paid on her coming of age.

This was the final arrangement, so far as more money went.

But the plans that had been formed for Clara's education and life during her girlhood had not been changed after the making of the will.

Clara was to remain under the care and direction of her step-mother until she had attained the age of twenty-one, unless she should marry before that time with the consent of her guardian and of Mrs Nugent—the guardian in question being the old friend and family lawyer, to whom, with another trustee, the care of Clara's pecuniary interests was confided.

Such was the will read and proved after the death of Howard Nugent.

It was of small concern to Clara at the moment, save in one respect—she was to be under the step-mother's care and guardianship.

That was enough to make her forget all else.

The girl's nature underwent, as it were, a revolution from that day.

The crushed, woe-stricken orphan became in one short hour, a reserved, hopeless, yet high-spirited dreamer of the past and the future.

At least that gratification could not be taken from her.

The memories of the past softened the hard spirit; the hopes of the future, the certainty of freedom at a fixed though distant period cast a faint gleam on the clouds that surrounded her; and the heiress of Temple Nugent left the presence of the hated step-mother and the grave, formidable guardians with one fixed idea.

No influence, however great, no authority however stern, should mould her to the wishes or the schemes of the step-mother. No suffering should turn her from the one purpose of her life, to carry out her mother's injunctions and plans for her future, and to fit herself for—for what?

Clara scarcely confessed it to herself that there was in her child's heart one memory and one hope on which her whole world turned.

The rest were buried in the gloomy family vault, in the distant church that had for generations seen the christenings, the marriages of the Nugent family.

It was hours ere she appeared again after that last testament of her father's had been made known to her, and when she obeyed Mrs. Nugent's summons to the boudoir, before bedtime, the whole aspect and manner of the girl seemed changed.

"Clara, my dear child, you have heard the last wishes of your father.

"I am sure you will obey them by yielding to me the respect and deference that it is evident he desired I should claim from you.

"I shall loose no time in arranging plans for your education on a system which accord with your health and your natural talents better than the one framed by your poor dear mother.

"I shall take care that no blame can be attached to me, at any rate, if your health does not strengthen and improve before your majority; every safe amusement and pursuit shall be furnished you."

"Am I to be taught by you and Eleanor still?" asked the child, calmly.

"Well, no—not exactly. Eleanor will of course be much occupied now that she is nearly of an age to give up masters and enter more into society."

Clara's lips quivered.

Her father was scarcely cold in the tomb, her dear mother's ashes were hardly turned to dust, ere this woman spoke of "society"! How Clara's eyes flashed and her heart throbbed at the idea! But she had taken her resolve, and she made no sign of the rebellion in her heart.

"Then I am to have a governess?"

"That remains to be considered. I am rather inclined to trust to masters, but I have not decided at present. The shock has been so great, my bereavement is so recent, that it is only a sense of stern duty that has given me calmness to think of my responsibilities.

"However, in a few days I shall have formed my plans and will inform you of them, Clara.

"I am seldom remiss where my duty is concerned."

And the white handkerchief was applied to the dry eyes, and the lady's salts applied to her nose.

Clara stood quietly waiting her dismissal. It came at last.

"You may go now, Clara. I am surprised, and of course pleased, to see you so perfectly composed.

"I thought from the specimens of your conduct I have had on previous occasions that we should have some trouble with you.

"I am glad that you are learning to be sensible."

And the lady bent forward to press a cold kiss on the immovable lips.

Clara went to her room.

Mrs. Selwyn undressed her as she had done since her infancy, but even to her the girl was reserved.

"Please don't—I cannot bear it, Selwyn," she had said, when the nurse tried to win from her some confidence and to offer some consolation.

And the good woman understood her, and, though her heart bled for her nursling and vague fears for the future haunted her, she quietly and silently performed her usual duties, and let Clara to repose.

There was little sleep at Castle Nugent that night.

Clara lay awake shedding bitter, resentful tears; Mrs. Nugent was full of busy schemes, and Eleanor of wild and brilliant imaginings.

It was a fateful night, for it fixed the destiny of many, although for otherwise than accordance with the plans and schemes that were then matured.

CHAPTER IV.

A LOVELY morning had broken over the domain of Temple Nugent, in a singularly fine July, some six years after the death of its master, and eight from the day when Alwynne Compton had hidden his little playmate farewell in the favorite alcove that had witnessed so many of their happiest hours.

There had been a rather unusual putting in order of the mansion and grounds that month.

Perhaps it was in honor of the approaching eighteen birthday of the heiress that the grounds were newly laid out, that fresh conservatories had been built and filled with rare flowers, that the house had been renovated, and the apartments decorated with exquisite taste.

And yet all that could scarcely account for the extreme and sudden care taken by Eleanor Le Grande to arrange and replenish her summer toilette, for the conferences with dressmakers and milliners, and with a new maid, supposed to be learned in the art of "making up" faces as well as shapes; for Eleanor was getting to an age when beauty is supposed to be not altogether independent of art, when the eyes and the complexion lose some of their radiance, and the features some of the roundness and softness of first youth.

Eleanor was now twenty-seven, although she was never supposed in public to have passed the age of twenty-five; and the handsome brunette who had shone and glittered in vain for the last ten years began to look pale beside the young heiress of eighteen summers.

Nevertheless Eleanor was handsome still; and she knew how to make the greatest capital of her beauty; so far as externals went.

But, with it all, Eleanor never had an eligible offer.

She and her mother placed the failure to the account of Mr. Nugent's illiberality, and complaints and vituperations were lavished on the once dreaded owner of all that they enjoyed of wealth and luxury.

Of late the girl had begun to flag in her efforts; and when no one was there to see, her toilette, looks, attitudes, and manners hardly accorded with these of a fashionable belle.

But there was a sudden blazing forth now of the dying embers; and Clara, had she designed to waste much thought on her half-sister's caprices, would have wondered at the stir and bustle that suddenly reigned in the domain.

She asked no questions—she had inured herself to that; she only secluded herself more in her favorite apartments, indulging occasionally in a smile of bitterness at the peacock-like adornments of her sister.

But on this day Eleanor had surpassed herself.

The morning toilette was the perfection of taste.

A pale rose-colored muslin, clasped with a broad sash, and edged with the finest of white Valenciennes lace, it had been; while Eleanor's dark hair had been braided up in a fashion that was the perfection of art from its apparent simplicity.

Still no visitor came to admire or to criticise as the long July morning wore away; and again Clara was half perplexed at the caprice of the girl, who had taken so much trouble for her own and her step-mother's admiration.

Clara's own simple dress was quickly arranged as the dinner hour approached. The heiress of the large estates of Temple Nugent seldom made a more elaborate toilette than that of a country rector; and in this instance she merely put on a white dress, with her one constant ornament, an antique locket of her mother's, which contained her hair, and which was suspended by a fine Maltese chain round her fair neck.

When Clara descended to the small drawing-room that was the family's sitting apartment, she half started at the sight of her beautiful step-sister.

Eleanor was dressed in the most becoming of India muslins, trimmed with scarlet geranium blossoms.

A handsome clasp joined the sash, and the girl's hair was set off by a large pin of pearls and rubies.

It was not too elaborate for a home toilette, and was so becoming that it would have taken one more than usually skilled in feminine attire to surpass it in beauty.

Clara gave one glance of genuine admiration; then as her eyes fell on the minute details of face and hair and general "get up" of the fair Eleanor, an expression of contemptuous scorn came over her face, and she passed through the room to the favorite resort, a large conservatory that was at once an adjunct and a means of escape from the drawing-room on to the terraces and thence into the gardens.

Clara frequently spent hours in that floral retreat; and Mrs Nugent and Eleanor little cared in what direction her fancy led her, so that it did not interfere with their own plans and caprices.

Mrs. Nugent had not yet appeared.

Clara knew that she should hear the sound of the dinner-bell, and the announcement of the meal was never till the gong had sounded; therefore she strolled quietly through the tempting arcade of blossoms and gorgeous flowers to the terrace beyond; and, as she stood there, watching the approaching decline of the sun, and the promise it gave of a brilliant setting she remembered with strange vividness an evening which it recalled to her mind—an evening before Alwynne had left, when her mother and the youth stood on that very spot, gazing on a sunset like the one which was rapidly unfolding, and when she, a tiny child, had listened and looked and appreciated its beauties almost as they had done.

The minutes flew on; still no dinner-bell rang, though the hour for the meal was long past.

Clara fancied that she must have been too preoccupied to hear the sound, and hastily turned into the conservatory, with the full expectation of a sharp reproof for having kept her companions waiting. As she entered, however, the sound of her step-mother's voice, in an unusually bland tone, arrested her attention.

She was apparently just coming into the room, for Clara could hear the rustle of the rich silks that were her usual costume.

The girl stopped for a moment, for a name caught her ear—a familiar name that made her heart throb and her pulses beat.

"Eleanor, my dear, I bring you an old friend, though I doubt whether you will recognize each other after all these years. Eleanor was such a child when you left, Mr. Compton, and you were a mere youth."

Clara stood paralyzed for a few minutes. Then she stole softly forward to where she could obtain a glimpse of the drawing-room through an arch of rich flowers, and where she commanded a view of the group while being unseen herself.

Alwynne Compton! Yes; she could recognize him, though he was indeed much changed, but still, in Clara's eyes entirely for the better.

His was a peculiar face, yet singularly attractive—grave and dark and a little haughty, but capable of softening suddenly with an enchanting smile.

The eyes were black and penetrating; the voice was soft and melodious; figure and

bearing were characterized by both dignity and utter want of pretension.

Such was Alwynne Compton in Clara's eyes at that instant.

Now she understood all—the unusual bustle in the house, Eleanor's elaborate toilette, the delay of the usual hour of dinner.

Alwynne Compton had been expected, and she, his old playmate, the daughter of his boyhood's guardian, the sole real attraction that could have brought him back to Temple Nugent—she had been left in ignorance of his return.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A Cruel Ending.

BY GEORGE ARNOLD.

BESSIE GREENLEAF sat in the third car from the engine, on the left hand side, and looked listlessly at the landscape with weary face.

And yet it was a pretty face, and girlish, for all the hints of suffering in the drooping lines about the red mouth and the lurking shadows in eyes that were like bits of a sunny day's blue sky.

And if every one in the car had known that Miss Greenleaf had just inherited a fortune of several thousand, they would probably have thought that it should have been a happy face.

But no one in the car knew Bessie Greenleaf, or of her good fortune, and no one took much notice of the quietly simply-dressed little girl travelling from her farm-home to reign mistress supreme in a big city mansion.

And yet there was another person in that car, in the very seat in front of Bessie, who had possibly seen her, and who certainly had heard of her, as Miss Greenleaf learned during the latter part of her journey.

The train swept through the glowing autumnal farm-lands to the suburbs of the city, and presently into a dark busy station.

Bessie, aroused by the bustle and confusion, looked around her, and was surprised at seeing a familiar face coming towards her, a lady she had met in town nearly two years before.

It was a familiar face to some one else also.

The gentleman just in front of Miss Greenleaf sprang up with extended hand, and offered part of his seat to the new-comer, which she graciously accepted.

In her loneliness and general forlornness—Bessie longed to speak to the lady; but she felt that their few formal meetings in the past would scarcely warrant her making herself known, and then she was not at all sure but that her very existence was forgotten by one whose acquaintance was extensive, and whose time was occupied constantly by the demands of society.

So Bessie held her peace and caught what scraps of conversation she could, in the foolish hope of hearing a name she well knew.

And at last she heard it—the very name that was burned on her heart in fires of unending pain—heard it with a catch of her breath, and leaned forward eagerly to listen—without a thought or a care that she was acting in a most ill-bred manner, only with a mad thirst to hear what she could of Dr. Nelson Darrell.

"And what has become of Darrell?" the gentleman was saying.

"Doctor Darrell? Why, you know that he married a wealthy widow?

"They live in Bond Street, have a handsome establishment, and she gives any number of entertainments.

"Doctor Darrell cares less for society than his wife."

"And so he never married that little niece of old Greenleaf's?"

"Of course he did not!" and the lady laughed, such an incredulous, amused little laugh, that pillars of flaming blood shot up into Bessie Greenleaf's cheeks.

She was glad now that she had not made herself known to these two.

"But," persisted the gentleman, "why not? I'm sure it was rumored that he was very much smitten with the charms of the little girl."

"And I don't doubt he was, but she was an orphan, and poor, and fresh from the country; and Mrs. Ellison was in love with him, and rich, and versed in all the arts that handsome women of the world know so well how to use, and bent upon marrying him. Was not the result inevitable?

"Can any young, unsophisticated girl, however pretty, hold her own against a woman with the same beauty and added age and experience?

"And the little Greenleaf girl lacked wealth and social culture, and Mrs. Ellison had both, and so it ended in Darrell's marrying the widow.

"It is the way of the world, you know."

"Yes, it is the way of the world."

"The way of the world," echoed Bessie to herself, and leaned back in her seat with a bitterer heart than had ever throbbed in her bosom before, even during the weary weeks when she waited for Nelson Darrell to prove himself true, and sadly learned him false.

But then, what was it they were saying, in front of her?

"It may be a very sentimental view of it that I take, but I've an idea that Darrell did care considerably for the little Greenleaf, and is not quite happy nor satisfied with his marital life.

"He is not the same man he used to be, and he seems to avoid society.

"By the way, you've heard how suddenly all the Greenleaf family died, father, mother and son, and that the little niece is heiress?

"No?

"Well, it is so—almost like a novel, is it not?

"And I'm sorry for the little thing if she meets Doctor Darrell—and he cares for her yet—she so young and inexperienced."

"Sorry for me!" cried Bessie passionately, putting her thick veil over her face.

"I wonder if they think I would let him care for me now—or that I care one snap of my fingers for him!"

And yet she did care.

She had never ceased to care for the man who had opened the gates of heaven to her girlish heart, and then had let her go back to her dreary country life, to wait through agonizing months for a word from him that never came.

* * * * * *

It was such an odd life that little Bessie Greenleaf led in her great new home, no one but lawyers to advise her, and she so young and so ignorant.

To be sure she had a chaperone—a meek old lady suggested by one of her solicitors, and she received some ungrammatical letters of advice from her distant aunt to the effect that she ought to get along with one servant, and had better make her own bread, and ought not to buy more than two new gowns.

But Bessie smiled a little over these, and kept up the house just as it had been kept by her aunt Greenleaf during the three months Bessie had spent in town two years before, and left all domestic cares to the old housekeeper who had served her aunt for years.

And Bessie was not likely to be very extravagant, but as she happened to be recommended to a *modiste* with some conscience and considerable taste, she soon wore costumes that set off her roseleaf face and *petite* figure wonderfully well, and really looked so improved that people noticed her admiringly.

And invitations commenced to flow in.

Bessie returned her calls, and then—she really hardly knew how much farther she might indulge herself socially, while she remained in mourning.

And as people urged her to attend this little dinner, and that *soiree*, "really, quite informal affairs, you know, my dear," and the meek old lady seemed to think it all right for her to go, she soon found herself enjoying quite a whirl of mild dissipation, all unconscious of how, as is the way of the world, sharp-tongued young ladies and highly decorous dowagers were horrifiedly discussing her "bad form" in going out in deep mourning.

But, at least, Bessie knew enough not to dance.

And so it happened that one night when there was a little dance after a dinner, she sat quite alone for a time, save for her chaperone, at one end of the big parlors, when up walked Nelson Darrell.

She was not prepared to see him there.

He and his wife had come in late.

She flushed rosily, like the sky at sunrising, and her little hand trembled as she laid it in his extended one.

"Bessie!"

That was all Dr. Darrell said, but he stood looking down into her face with sad entreating eyes, and held her hand long in his close warm clasp, while the girl trembled, unable to gain the cold self-control she had told herself she would always show when she met him.

And of course Darrell knew that she loved him.

Bessie even never thought of drawing her hand away until she had held it so long that a few meaning looks had passed between the nearest spectators.

And when he seated himself beside her and commenced talking about trivial matters, but in that old fascinating way of his, and in the same sweet voice, with caresses in its cadences, the girl had no choice but to listen and to answer as she had been wont to listen and to answer two years before.

"I must introduce my wife to you, Bessie," he said at last, rising.

And when the girl's lips whitened, he bent above her and whispered passionately—"Don't look like that, Bessie. It breaks my heart."

* * * * * * *

And so Bessie nerved herself to meet the handsome, wealthy, experienced woman who, after the way of the world, had won from the little country girl an adored lover.

Mrs. Darrell was condescendingly pleasant, and chatted gaily with—or rather at—the little heiress for a few minutes, and then declared that she must hasten to fill another engagement.

"I'm sorry to take the carriage, doctor, and keep you waiting," she said to her husband, "though perhaps you will not mind it very much," smiling towards Bessie.

"But I will tell James to drive back for you."

"No, don't trouble yourself," returned Darrell.

"Miss Greenleaf drives past our house; I am sure she will kindly give me a seat in her carriage."

And what could Bessie say but—

"Certainly—with pleasure."

And so Darrell rode home with her; and the next morning he and his wife came to ask her to a dinner that evening.

And after that she saw the Darrells very often, and the doctor fell into a habit of calling on her almost daily, and singing with her, and telling her what books she ought to read, and chatting in a pleasant desultory way.

There was nothing in the intimacy to alarm Bessie—unless she had been old enough and experienced enough to dissect her own heart—its fatally sweet state of repose, until one day in the sweet spring-time Darrell asked her to ride with him that afternoon.

"Oh, ought I to?" she questioned, a little frightenedly.

"Why not, Bessie?

"Would I ask you if I thought you ought not to go?

"Say yes, Bessie.

"I want you to go so much.

"Say yes, dear Bessie."

His face was drooped so near to the girl's that his pulsing breath beat against her and his eyes seemed drawing her soul from out her bosom.

Poor Bessie!

She had no power to refuse.

He took her silence for consent, and went rapidly away.

Miss Greenleaf hesitated a little before she prepared for the drive.

She mentioned it before her chaperone, but the meek old lady only said—

"It is a pleasant day for driving, dear."

Ah, if only some one had been there to advise her.

Along Piccadilly and through the park Dr. Darrell drove with the little flower-faced girl beside him.

Men met them, and bowed and smiled.

Women met them, and stared and bowed with sweetest smiles to Nelson, and avoided Bessie's eyes.

They drove far into the country.

When they came back the stars were lighting their little lamps in the purple April heavens, and a silver crescent hung against the faint far horizon.

There was the smell of clover and hyacinths in the air.

They were very, very still.

Suddenly Bessie raised a thoughtful little face to Darrell's.

"Do you know that I have been trying to understand something all this afternoon? Why did so many people that we know bow to you to-day, and not seem to see that I was with you?"

Darrell flushed darkly.

"Why, Bessie?

"What difference does it make?

"Are you jealous of me, little one?" he faltered.

"No, oh no!

"But I was afraid it was because I ought not to have come with you.

"Only if it was wrong for me, was it not wrong for you?

"And why should they bow to you and not to me?"

"I think the whole thing imagination, Bessie, on your part.

"But there was no harm in our coming, for we love each other—we love to be together.

"Is that not so, Bessie?

"You love me, darling, of that I am sure. And you must know that I——"

"Nellie! Nellie!"

It was the old name by which she called him, and threw her arms madly about him. But it was in no response to his passionate avowals.

A horse rushing wildly down the road was close upon them.

In another instant there was an interlocking of wheels, a plunge, smothered curses, a low groan, and Dr. Darrell held a small white-faced figure in his arms—dead.

And little Bessie Greenleaf was saved from ever knowing why people smiled on Dr. Darrell and seemed not to see her; while society, having said sufficiently hard things about the dead heiress to keep up its reputation for virtue, forgot her existence when she was laid away under the Greenleaf marble in Woodlawn, but smiles as sweetly as ever on Nelson Darrell—after the way of the world.

THE OLD GUM SHOE.—Do you remember the old fashioned rubber shoe? Ah, that was a shoe worth having! It was none of your flimsy, trim, skinny abomination of the present degenerate day; it was a great clumsy, ill looking moccasin, that had neither form nor symmetry, but it would wear out a dozen of our modern shoes. What an art was it to put the thing on! Turning it half inside out, you put your toe into its interior, and then with a tug and a jerk you pulled the heel in place, and you were inside of a shoe that clung to you tighter than a brother! And what fun was it at school to dimple in the toe, place a spit-ball in the hollow, and then, with fingers inside to send the ball with catapultic power smack into the face of the studious scholar on the opposite side of the room! Alas! there is no fun in the modern rubber shoe, and but very little wear! Joy and utility have given place to more beauty of outline and prosaic comfort.

WARMING A SERPENT.—A well-known place of refreshment in Concord, N. H., is presided over by a man of such tender sensibilities that when, the other night, just as he was shutting up shop, he discovered a half-frozen owl on the door-step, he took the bird in and made it comfortable. When he retired for the night he left the owl perched upon the safe, to which one of its legs was fastened by a stout cord, and blinking with extreme gratitude and devotion. As soon as he had gone the owl bit the cord in two, devoured every fragment of food on a well-stocked lunch counter, sampled every kind of drink in the saloon, broke all the bottles and decanters within reach, and in the morning, when the doors were opened was standing solemnly behind the counter ready for business.

NOTHING teaches patience like a garden. You may go round and watch the opening bud from day to day, but it takes its own time, and you cannot urge it on faster than nature directs.

Bric-a-Brac.

THE YEW TREE.—The yew tree is said to be planted in churchyards, not from any superstition about its being appropriate to death and mourning, but because in the olden times churchyards were strongly fenced, and the yew, which was used for making bows, was thereby preserved from the depredations of the cattle.

THE SUN'S HEAT.—Lecturing in Boston on the sun, Prof. Langley said, that if a column of ice having a diameter at its base of forty-five miles, and extending to the moon, were erected on one of our western prairies, and all heat of the sun were concentrated suddenly upon it, it would melt and become vapor in a single second.

LATERAN COUNCILS.—They were held in the Basilica of the Lateran, at Rome. Of these councils there were five; by the first the right of investiture was settled between Pope Calixtus II. and the Emperor Henry V., 1122; by the second council was secured the temporalities of ecclesiastics, 1139; the third was to denounce schismatics, 1179; the fourth on church affairs, attended by four hundred bishops and one thousand abbots; and the fifth was the famous council of Julius II., 1512.

LIFE IN INDIA.—One of the conditions of life in India is amusingly illustrated by the following resolution, recently passed by the Municipal Commissioners of Bellary: "Resolved, that as the loose monkeys in the town have become exceedingly troublesome, by attacking women and children carrying eatables, and overturning the tiles of the roofs of houses in the town, these animals be caught and sent out into the jungles, and that arrangements be made that monkeys may not receive any injury while being seized. The Commissioners vote the sum of $100 for meeting the expenditure which may be incurred in carrying out this resolution."

FEBRUARY.—February is the second and shortest month of the year. Among the Romans who named the most of our months it was considered the begining of or preparation for Spring, and the god whose festival they held at that time was known as Luperous, the god of fertility. They sacrificed goats and dogs to him, and afterwards the priests cut up and twisted the skins of the animals into whips and ran through all the villages and towns, striking at every one they met. This was thought to purify, and people got in their path to be whipped by them. This ceremony was a symbol of purification, and was called Februalis, from the Latin word Februare, which meant to purify or make ready.

THE OLDEST TREE.—The oldest tree in the world, says *Knowledge*, so far as anyone knows, is the Bo tree, of the sacred city of Amarapoora, in Burmah. It was planted 288 B. C., and is therefore now 2,170 years old. Sir James Emerson Tennent gives reasons for believing that the tree is really of this wonderful age, and refers to historic documents, in which it is mentioned at different dates, as 182 A. D., 238 A. D. and so on to the present day. "To it," says Sir James, "kings have even dedicated their dominions, in testimony of their strange belief that it is a branch of the identical fig-tree under which Buddha reclined at Urumelya, when he underwent his apotheosis." Its leaves are carried away as streamers by pilgrims, but it is too sacred to touch with a knife, and therefore they are only gathered when they fall. The king oak in Windsor Forest, England, is 1,000 years old.

GERMAN HOUSEWIVES.—German ladies are housewives, every one of them, in whatever grade of life they may be found. In the richest German household, the mistress superintends the kitchen and lends a hand to the cook. There are certain dishes which she always makes with her own hands, because her Frits likes them so. She may boast thirty-two quarterings on her escutcheon and be terribly proud of her lineage, but she has no nonsensical ideas about its being degrading to put on a canvas apron, lard a piece of veal, make jams, or dole out with her own hands the prunes that are to be put into the potato stew. She keeps her best attire for Sundays, and makes it serve on a good many of these festal days, for she does not follow fashion blindly or in a hurry. On ordinary days she dresses with a plainness which would excite the contempt of a French woman; but then her culinary pursuits do not prevent her from being by far the intellectual superior of her French or Belgian sister.

WOMAN'S LOVE.—A Duke of Savoy, who made some pretentions to the city of Geneva sought to gain it by surprise; he scaled the walls in the night, but his success was not equal to his wishes. The alarm being given that a great number of besiegers had mounted the walls, the citizens ran to arms and repulsed their enemies, who were too weak to resist them. Those who fell into their hands were led to an ignominious death. Among the prisoners was an officer who had distinguished himself for his valor. The news of his misfortune being carried to his wife, she flew to the place where her husband was to perish, and demanded to embrace him for the last time. They refused her this favor, and the officer was hung without her being permitted to approach him. She, nevertheless, followed the body of her husband to the place where it was exposed. She thereupon seated herself by the melancholy spectacle, and remained without taking any nourishment or suffering her eyes to be abstracted for a moment from the object of her affection. Death, which she had waited for with impatience, came at last, and closed her eyes while she was stretched over the dead body of her husband.

NEVER AGAIN!

BY L. D. K.

Never again! Oh, my darling, the echo,
Bitter and sorrowful, rings through my brain;
Thro' all the future in sadness dividèd,
Happy together—ah, never again!

Never again! Will they ever be silent,
All the wild notes of this dreary refrain,
Must they unceasing break in on my dreaming?
Never again, love, ah, never again!

Never again! Your fond handclasp is over,
Parted for ever these sad hearts of pain!
Farewell, my darling, my lover no longer,
Parted—to meet, dearest, never again!

So all life's journey alone I must traverse,
Lonely and weary thro' sunshine and rain;
Never once more to thy fond words to hearken—
Never again, darling—never again!

TIFF.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A GREAT MISTAKE," "ROSE OF THE WORLD," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—[CONTINUED.]

AND what is this about Tiffany?" asked Mr. Beaufoy, who seemed more bent upon getting at the true state of affairs than interested in Ninon's personal struggles.

"It is through Tiffany that my step-mother always tries to master me," said the girl. "I am very fond of Tiffany, though I know it does not look like it. In my own selfish way, at least, I am fond of her. And Mrs. Masserene has threatened before now to send her out as a servant if I allow her to interfere with my prospects of a rich marriage. It sounds unreal, doesn't it?" she asked, with her bitter smile. "You can hardly believe it? But only yesterday, as I told you, my step-mother beat me, and would have driven me out of the house, but that I told her I was engaged to you. She was afraid then. And, besides, she believed me. She thinks that we are going to be married, and that I shall live here always, and ask her to the Priory."

The girl burst into a peal of hysterical laughter that ended in a burst of tears. Brian quietly brought her a glass of water, and begged her to be calm.

"Some one may come," he said, with a man's nervous horror of a scene. "Ninon, pray sit up and drink this."

She did her best to obey him. But he had to hold the glass to her lips, her own hand trembled so, and to support the pretty head for a second against his shoulder while she drank. Her black hair, sweet with its faint odor of flowers, brushed his cheek; she lifted her great blue eyes, heavy with tears, to his as he stood above her.

"Thank you," she said, sobbing still. "You are very good. I don't deserve it. I won't cry any more."

He took his arm away from her, and walked to a little distance. Between his brows were the two deep lines that Ninon had learned to recognize long since as a sign of annoyance or mental disturbance.

"Are you able to listen to me now?" he asked at last, in a curious abrupt voice.

She nodded an assent. She was rapidly drying her eyes, and assuming a less abandoned attitude.

"I understand the strait in which you were placed yesterday," he went on. "And, though I don't believe that any good ever came of a falsehood, I suppose you know best how to manage your step-mother, and I have no right to find fault with your behavior except in so far as it concerns myself. Supposing however that I keep your secret for a time—no!"—curtly, as Ninon uttered an exclamation of relief. "I have not yet said that I will consent. I never do anything without reflection, I hope. But, supposing I decide upon accepting the very odious part you have chosen to give me to play, what will you gain by it after all? Sooner or later the truth must be known, of course. I confess I am puzzled again."

"It will give me time," explained Ninon, hurriedly—she had started up, and had followed him to the fireplace, where he again stood, leaning against the tall mantelpiece with its carved motto—"and it will bring back Tiffany. Only let me get her back, and I will never leave her again. I have said that before, but now I have had a bitter lesson. Brian"—she put her hand timidly on his arm—"you will not betray me? You will consent? Heaven knows you will not want, later, for a hundred excuses for breaking off our mock engagement! But by that time Dick will be home. I shall have some one to take care of Tiff and me."

"And"—Brian shrugged his shoulders—"how, pray, will you explain matters to Mr. Strong?"

Ninon flushed.

"I will tell him the truth," she said.

Mr. Beaufoy's eyes assumed the sarcastic expression of the portrait he so strongly resembled.

"The truth?" he repeated drily; and Ninon colored more deeply still.

"Not all of it," she answered humbly. "What would be the use of making him so unhappy? I mean that I'll tell him about—about Tiffany, and about you, if you will consent to help me."

Mr. Beaufoy paused. The two perpendicular lines between his eye-brows were deeper than ever. He sighed impatiently and plunged his hands deep into his pockets. Ninon stood and watched him, like one awaiting sentence of life or death.

Suddenly he turned his keen dark eyes upon the girl's face again.

"It seems to me," he said, with a bitter smile, "that Quentin would have been a more probable person to choose than me. People will find it difficult to believe your story, viewed in the light of the past few weeks."

Ninon hung her head.

"Quentin is my cousin," she said; "and he has always been very kind to me. Is it any wonder that I have liked to talk to him and to dance with him?"

"None, I suppose"—curtly. "But why not have applied to him rather than to me—who have not been 'kind,' as you call it—in this absurd scrape?"

"Because—oh, can't you understand?" cried the girl, almost worn out by this long catechism, by his reluctance and coldness. "It is because you are Mr. Beaufoy of the Priory. Quentin is almost as poor as Dick, isn't he? My step-mother would think one as bad as the other."

"I see," answered Mr. Beaufoy coldly.

"And then," Ninon went on, stung by his continued indifference, "for you there is no danger in the position; whereas for Quentin——"

She paused, and the pause was significant enough. Brian shrugged his shoulders again.

"I will not ask you how you arrived at the conclusion," he said, with the sarcastic look that Ninon so much dreaded to see. "I suppose that is one of the details that you will refrain from imparting to Mr. Strong."

Ninon drew up her slender throat.

"All that is between Dick and me," she said, with sudden haughtiness.

"I have begged and humbled myself long enough, and now I will trouble you no longer, Mr. Beaufoy. After all, what does it matter? Tiffany will be better away from me than with me, if she could only think so, poor child! I will go home to-morrow and tell my step-mother that it was all a lie. You will be rid of me then for good."

She would have swept from the room, a beautiful statue incarnate in her dusky dishevelled locks and with her flashing eyes, but again Brian Beaufoy held her back.

"Do not be so excitable," he said coolly. "I am quite aware that I have no right to criticize your actions at present. But—understand me, Ninon—I shall claim that right henceforth until Mr. Strong's return."

"Ah," the girl cried eagerly, "you consent then, you will not betray me?"

"Yes, I consent," he answered slowly, "to let your step-mother consider me for the present"—his dark face gained a little color—"your *fiance*; and let me add that in my opinion you have wilfully brought about the greater part of your troubles by your own perversity. I do this solely and entirely for Tiffany's sake."

Ninon clasped her hands with a sigh of intense relief.

"I would rather you did it for Tiff than for me," she said.

"Do you think I would have asked it for myself? Oh, Brian, she needs a friend—indeed she does! If I dared—you are my cousin, and in some sense hers—I would ask you to help her when she comes back to me. She has had almost no education, and she is so clever—she has such a gift for music."

"We will see about it," said Mr. Beaufoy, more kindly than he had yet spoken.

"We will put our heads together and consult Florry. And now I think we had better go back to the drawing-room. We have been away too long already."

"But, considering that I have proposed to you, and that I have been accepted," cried Ninon, smiling through her tears, "the time has not been wasted!

"Brian"—she put her two hands impulsively into his—"I am very grateful, indeed I am! I will be as good as I can until Dick comes back.

"But"—hesitating and looking up with a glance half coquettish, half pleading—"you will not be hard upon me? It is that which makes me feel wicked. You are not going to scold me for every little joke I make, or for every little folly I may commit?"

"I thought you had just made up your mind to commit no more," answered Brian, smiling down, in spite of himself, into the sweet ensnaring eyes.

"I don't promise not to scold you. Do you try to give me no cause for lectures."

"Yes," she said obediently.

Those few seconds were sweet to her with a sudden bewildering sweetness. Was it indeed her cold grave cousin was looking at her and speaking to her so gently, even though with such a man-like tone of authority? She lifted one of the hands she held, and softly laid her cheek against it. Mr. Beaufoy started at the velvety touch—perhaps he thought for a second that it had been easy to blame Quentin for his infatuation as long as he himself had had no idea of what this girl's pretty changeful ways could be, of the subtle infatuation that seemed to emanate from her when she chose, like the odor from a flower, indefinable, intangible, irresistible almost.

"Come!" he said, with an effort. "Since you belong to me for a few months, I must take care that you commit no more imprudences. Go back to the drawing-room. I will follow you."

As the girl's white and slender form went through the door and the heavy tapestry fell behind her, Brian drew a long breath, and began to pace restlessly up and down the vast old chamber.

As he passed by the place where Ninon had stood, he saw her little lace handkerchief on the floor, and he stooped and picked it up.

It had the sweet flower-like odor that clung to all the girl's garments and belongings, and a big fantastic "N" embroidered across one corner.

The young man stood and looked at it for a second or two, and then made as if he would have thrust it into the pocket of his dress-coat. But a moment later he flung it on to the table, with a shrug of his shoulders.

"She is an accomplished coquette," he said. "But she is not the first I have met. I think she will find that I can emerge unscathed from the peculiar ordeal she has prepared for me. The person most to be pitied in the whole affair is decidedly Mr. Richard Strong."

CHAPTER XXIX.

IT was hardly reasonable, after this reflection, that Mr. Beaufoy, on re-entering the drawing-room, should be conscious of a swift pang of annoyance when he saw that Ninon and Quentin were sitting apart as usual, and that the girl, flushed, eager, and trembling, seemed to be pleading with his brother, as he sat on a stool at her feet, with a somewhat obstinate look on his fair face.

Ninon started up when she saw Brian coming in, and at once crossed the room to Madame Du Mottay's side. Quentin looked round for the cause of this sudden movement, and, as his eyes fell on Mr. Beaufoy's disturbed face, he raised his shoulders and smiled in a somewhat irritating fashion which did not escape Brian's observation.

It was perhaps in the desire to give Quentin a Roland for his Oliver that he followed Miss Masserene and proceeded to take possession of her in the way that his younger brother had come to look upon as his own peculiar prerogative.

Ninon met him with a conscious little smile and shy upward glance as he sat by her on the sofa, which completed Quentin's amazement.

He could not account for this new state of things between Brian and his fair enemy, and he sat watching them with his eyes wide open.

They appeared to be conversing very amicably. And indeed Ninon was begging Mr. Beaufoy to intercede for her with Madame Du Mottay, in order that Mrs. Masserene might receive the so-much-coveted card for the ball.

Florry had protested indignantly that entreaties were in vain, and had escaped to avoid further persecution.

One of the young squires who had been so subjugated at an early period of their visit to the Priory by Miss Masserene's charms was amusing a ring of laughing girls with a performance of the "second sight" mystery, which he had seen at some conjurer's entertainment.

With his back turned and his eyes bandaged, and with the assistance of an accomplice naturally, he was amazing them all by giving an exact description of the various objects selected for his identification.

It was wonderful! Laura's necklace, Ethel's little slipper, the plaque of Limoges enamel over the door, the number of *bon bons* in a box on a table—he had faithfully described them all when they were touched by his assistant.

How was it managed?

They must try to puzzle him a little more. One of the girls had a brilliant idea, and, after some whispering with the others in a corner, came over on tip-toe to Ninon as she sat on the sofa beside Mr. Beaufoy.

Would Miss Masserene mind lending to them that curious Indian ring she always wore? Sir Harry would never, never think of that! They were the signs of the zodiac, were they not—those carved figures?

Ninon suddenly turned crimson.

"I am so sorry," she said, with what seemed to pretty Ethel unnecessary confusion. "I have mislaid my ring somewhere to-day. You see I have not got it on. If I can lend you anything else——"

But nothing else would do, and the pretty girl ran back to the others to contrive a still deeper puzzle for Sir Harry.

"You have lost your ring?" asked Brian, looking at the pretty hand. "Where? Have you any idea?"

"In—in the music-room, I think," she faltered. "At least, it was there I missed it first.

"We will have it looked for," answered Mr. Beaufoy, and went on with his interrupted talk, which had been all about Tiffany.

He was asking Ninon whether her step-mother would consent to the little thing's going to a boarding-school for a year or two, and whether that was what Ninon would like best for her sister.

"I thought her a very sweet-looking and sensible child," he declared cordially. "It is a pity that she should go on wasting her time much longer."

"She is as sweet as she looks," declared Ninon, her blue eyes filling with tears of joy. "Oh, Brian, if you will do that, I will surely be grateful to you as long as I live!"

"You persuade your step-mother, and I will make the rest all right," he said quietly.

"Oh," Ninon said, clasping her hands, "how happy I am! And how frightened I was when I came down stairs this evening! I was afraid to look you in the face; and, after all, you have been very, very kind."

"I am not so sure of that," answered Brian, with a half sigh. "I never knew any good yet to come of deceit or double-dealing; but it seems that I am in for it for a while. Let us hope it may all end well!"

He got up as he spoke, and walked away from her.

Florry was passing, and stopped to lay a finger on the girl's brilliant cheek.

"You are getting on, upon my word!" she said in French. "Brian sitting by your side and talking to you for ten minutes at a stretch—but it is marvellous!"

"Don't go!" cried Ninon, who saw that Quentin was coming across the long room to take the seat his brother had left vacant. "I want to talk to you about——"

"About Mrs. Masserene? *Merci*, I have had enough of the subject for one evening! Here is Quentin. Talk to him. You will find that much more amusing."

But Ninon declared, laughing though her cheeks burned more redly still, that she had said all she had to say to Quentin, that he bored her, that she was tired, and would go to bed.

"Has Brian forbidden you to speak to me any more to-night?" asked Ninon, in a low voice, as Florry flitted away to look at Sir Harry's performance.

Ninon's face lost its color. But she did not answer.

"He is not looking this way now, continued the young man, with a disagreeable smile. "We may continue our conversation."

"I have told you I have nothing more to say on the subject," said Quentin hurriedly. "Quentin, how can you be so unkind to me?"

"Unkind!" he retorted. "Is it I who am so unkind? What have I asked you, after all? To reward me for finding your ring by driving over to Dingley and dining with me, as you did before."

"You need not remind me of my folly," pleaded the girl dejectedly. "I was mad in those days. I am not much better now; but at least, I will not be so crazy as to do that again. I wonder how you can ask me!"

The ready tears were in her blue eyes as she raised them to his for a second.

"Don't look at me like that," the young man whispered passionately, "if you want me to give in, to be cold and prudent and regardful of Mrs. Grundy like Brian. How can I, when I am near you, and when I remember that when I go away, as I shall soon, you will be lost to me for ever? I envy you your facility for forgetting quickly, Ninon: but I cannot imitate it!"

Indeed he looked like one half distracted with pain, with jealousy; he was in a dangerously reckless mood, and Ninon was conscious of it, and felt utterly helpless in his hands.

"Why will you persist in talking as if—as if there had ever been any thing between us?" she said, with another red blush. "Quentin, it is not generous."

He broke into a laugh that made every one turn around and look at him.

"That is so like a woman!" he said. "Of course there has never been anything between us, because happiness, sympathy, delight are not tangible or practical enough to count. Ninon, for Heaven's sake, dare to be yourself again for a day! Dare to be the charming, provoking, bewitching woman I know you as, before Brian came with his solemn face to frighten you into playing propriety. Are you not safe with me? Why need you grudge me one last day of joy in your companionship?"

"It seems to me"—the girl tried to laugh—"that you have more of my companionship than any one else at the Priory. I don't think you need complain. Oh, Quentin, be good to me! Give me back the ring. I feel so lost without it."

"No," he said stubbornly; "why should I do what you ask, since you are so utterly indifferent to my wishes?"

"But it is mine! You have no right to keep it!" she cried, in an indignant whisper.

"Perhaps not"—coolly. "But possession is nine points of the law, and I have got the ring, you see."

"It is not fair. It is a shame," she went on, getting more and more distressed. "And you wear it on your finger in order that—that Mr. Beaufoy may see it, and think still worse of me than I deserve!"

Quentin's fair face turned as black as thunder.

"That is what you are afraid of, is it?" he said between his teeth.

"I might have known," he continued. "It is he who has been the cloud upon our sky from the day you first saw him. If I would not give you the ring when you asked it for yourself, you may think how much less I am inclined to do so out of fear of what Brian may say. You know my condition; whenever you choose to accept it, you shall have the ring back."

He got up and sauntered across the room—leaving the girl speechless, unhappy, with a fast-beating heart. What would Brian say if he chanced to see the ring on Quentin's hand? She had told him she had lost it, and it was true, but not all the truth: and he would believe that she had deceived him, that she had perhaps given it to his brother.

It would have been easy perhaps to speak to Brian and explain it all; but she did not feel that she had the right to appeal to him against Quentin.

Her conscience was not clear enough where Quentin was concerned. And he was in a dangerous mood. It might lead to words between the brothers.

She resolved to say nothing more about the ring. Quentin would soon tire of teasing her when he saw that she did not care, and perhaps Brian would not notice it on his finger.

But it happened that, after the ladies had gone up-stairs, some of the men, and among them Quentin, began to play billiards, and Mr. Beaufoy could not very well fail to see the broad gold ring on his brother's little finger.

"Oh, you have found it!" he said carelessly.

Quentin looked up as he made his point.

"Found what?" he asked as carelessly

"Ninon's ring. She was wondering where it could have got to."

"Ah!" the other answered.

Something in the tone of his voice made Brian look up at him.

"Did she tell you it was lost?"

And, without waiting for an answer, he coolly went on with his game.

When Ninon came down to breakfast on the following morning, Mr. Beaufoy said to her—

"Quentin has found your ring—did you know?"

She blushed, and was vexed at herself for doing so.

"So long as it is not lost," she said, giving Brian a little shy hand. They usually met with the coolest of bows; but she could not resist the impulse to give him a warmer greeting. And even Mr. Beaufoy found it an agreeable change.

She told him gratefully that she had found Mrs. Masserene's card for the ball on her dressing-table when she awoke, and that she knew she had to thank him for it.

"I am going home after breakfast," she added, her sweet face all lit up and quivering.

"I shall take the card, and I have no doubt I shall hear some news of Tiffany. Ah, I am so happy, so happy! I am afraid it is too good to last!"

And indeed, when she came back to luncheon, the girl looked dejected and pale enough.

It had seemed to her that, much as she had dreaded her confession to Mr. Beaufoy—she had never realized the full misery and degradation of her falsehood until that interview with her step-mother.

Mrs. Masserene's loudly expressed satisfaction, her ill-concealed exultation had been very hard to bear. And, as she was devoured by curiosity to hear all about the engagement which was to connect her with "the family" at the Priory, she put a series of questions to the unhappy girl, to each of which it was necessary to find an answer that would satisfy her.

"I must say you have both been very sly about the whole affair," she cried, radiant with pleasurable excitement.

"But, of course, if Madame Du Mottay has another match in her eye for Mr. Beaufoy, it is just as well to wait until she is out of the way. I suppose she is looking for money for him. As if he hadn't enough! I declare some people are never satisfied."

Ninon sat and listened in a kind of stupor.

"Poor John Melladew is in a dreadful way, and that's the truth," continued Mrs. Masserene, chuckling.

"But I should think he would know that he hadn't a chance against your cousin," she continued.

"You did not mention it to him?" demanded Ninon, alarmed.

"Oh, don't be afraid, my dear! I only just hinted at it. But he is a man who can put two and two together. And of course every one will know it before long."

Ninon looked the picture of helpless misery. What had she done? Every day would entangle her more and more surely in the net of deceit and false expectations which she had herself woven.

She tried to turn the conversation, to talk of Tiffany; but Mrs. Masserene had not half exhausted her budget of congratulations.

Her beautiful step-daughter was completely restored to her old proud position in the house. Everything must give way before her.

Tiffany was not worth naming in the same breath with the future Mrs. Beaufoy of the Priory.

But at last Ninon succeeded in obtaining a promise that she would not interfere with Mr. Beaufoy's plans for Tiff's education.

"It was Brian himself who proposed it," she added, blushing deeply with shame as she spoke his name in so familiar a fashion. "And"—hating herself more and more—"it is only natural that he should wish his—our connections to be on a level with him in every way."

Mrs. Masserene declared that she would be glad enough to get rid of Tiffany for a year or so, if it were only to save her expenses.

"I suppose you and Mr. Beaufoy will be travelling, and then you will want a season in London, of course. You will be presented at Court after your marriage. It will be so pleasant for him to know that there will always be some one who will always be at the Priory to look after things a little during your absence."

Ninon could stand it no longer, and took her leave, explaining that she had promised Florry to return to luncheon.

The pony-carriage was waiting for her. She was a person of far too much importance henceforth, of course, to be allowed to walk—Mrs. Masserene declared. She could not define the emotions that were agitating her as she drove homewards.

All this talk of marriage to Brian, unreal as it was, and filling her with humiliation, had yet had the power to make her cheeks burn, her eyes shine, her breath come faster as she listened to it.

It was only when she had time for reflection, for trying to realize what the end of all this must one day be, that the fever in her veins began to die out, and leave her wan, pale, dejected as the little carriage drew up at the door of the Priory.

She did not see Brian until the evening—when the gentlemen came into the drawing-room for some tea. He asked her at once if she had any news about Tiffany, and Ninon rewarded him with a grateful look.

"My step-mother will not interfere," she said, trying to rouse herself a little from the great depression that had fallen upon her.

"She has promised me that she shall come home at once. And I have been thinking"—with some hesitation—"that perhaps aunt Dorothy and Mary Hawthorn would be better able to advise us about the school than Florry. Mary was very fond of Tiff, and very good to her, as she is to every one indeed—even to me."

Brian looked in silence for some moments at the fair unhappy face. Then he said abruptly—

"Do you know that Quentin has found your ring, and that he has been wearing it all day?"

Ninon looked up startled.

"I—I will ask him for it," she faltered, feeling miserable that she was blushing as she spoke.

"I think you ought," Mr. Beaufoy answered as he moved away. "It is rather a peculiar one. People might remark it."

Ninon hoped that Quentin would keep away from her before dinner, at least, by which time Brian would in all probability have forgotten about the ring; but the young man had only been waiting until his brother had taken himself off, and presently came up and took possession of the low chair at her side.

She felt that Mr. Beaufoy was conscious that they were together, though he avoided any appearance of surveillance.

She knew that it was useless to ask Quentin again for the ring; but since he was there she would no longer be able to say to Brian, as she had meant to say later, by way of smoothing matters over, "I have not seen Quentin. I have not had an opportunity of asking for my ring."

She held out her pretty hand now, and demanded it with a somewhat tremulous smile. Her hand trembled as well as her lips.

"Have you come to make restitution?" she said, in a low voice.

Quentin shook his head.

"Nothing was farther from my thoughts," he said quietly.

"On the contrary, I was just calling to mind the bend in the river just before you come to the bridge at Dingley, and fancying how pretty it must be looking now in this delicious October weather."

Ninon drew back her hand and turned away from him, entering into a sudden and animated conversation with the good-natured Squire who had given the second-sight performance the night before.

"Sir Harry, you are always agreeable," she declared gaily, "and I know all my cousin's very limited stock of remarks by heart; so come and amuse me for half-an-hour before I go up stairs to dress for dinner. Where did you learn those wonderful things you were doing last night? I never saw anything so clever."

Quentin quietly ignored the hint, and kept his place at the girl's side until she rose to go.

"You are going to get an awful scolding from Brian," he said, following her across the room and into the picture-gallery, which was the shortest way of reaching her own room.

She turned upon him, her blue eyes flashing splendidly.

"Don't speak to me!" she said. "Don't dare to speak to me again as long as you have that ring on your hand! I would rather be scolded than threatened. Your brother is too manly for that at least!"

"Brian is a tremendous fellow, no doubt," sneered the young man, his voice trembling with passion.

"What is there about him to fill women with such awe, I wonder? His solemn face—or his twenty thousand a year? Perhaps, if I were as rich, you would be as much afraid of offending me as you are now of offending him."

Ninon walked on swiftly without answering.

Not a look did she vouchsafe him even as she passed beyond the embroidered curtains at the other end of the gallery, the melancholy brown eyes and sarcastic smile of Colonel Denis Beaufoy seeming to follow her as well as Quentin's blue and haggard gaze.

The young man turned back, thrusting his hands deep into his pockets and frowning.

He was conscious that he was not behaving well, but he seemed to be impelled by some power stronger than himself. That no woman is worth much trouble in the winning was a determination he had believed himself to have arrived at before he had met Miss Masserene, and he would have given much to be able to hold still to that belief.

What was there about this fair cousin of his to haunt and bewilder a man in spite of his better judgment?

Why could not he forget her as he had forgotten fifty pretty women before her, knowing that she was not for him, that the very course he was pursuing was estranging them more and more day by day?

There seemed to be no answer to these questions. He paused in his moody walk up and down the long darkening gallery, with its shining floor and reverberating echoes, and looked up at the picture of Gillian, smiling sadly at him out of her big gold frame in the October twilight. And, as he looked, he caught his breath with a sound that was almost a sob.

He did not know how long he had been standing there and looking up into the eyes that were so like Ninon's eyes, and at the smile, half mocking, half sad, that was like Ninon's smile, when footsteps at the end of the gallery, and the glimmer of a candle, made him turn around. It was Brian who was dressed for dinner, and staring in some surprise at his brother's belated figure and somewhat dishevelled appearance.

"You're late, are'nt you?" he said, as he drew near.

"But as you're here, just hold the candle for me while I open this cabinet. There are some papers here that I have been looking for, Jervis thinks."

Jervis was the steward. Quentin obeyed, and, as he held the candle, it became apparent to Mr. Beaufoy that he was still wearing Miss Masserene's ring.

A cloud passed over Brian's clear-cut face.

"Look here, Quentin," he said abruptly.

"I don't think it is good form to flaunt Ninon's ring in in that way before all those people.

"You had better give it back to her."

A quick flush rose to the roots of Quentin's fair hair.

"Has she sent you to ask for it?" he demanded, with a sneer.

Brian locked the cabinet, and, taking a candle, set it down on a table close by.

"No," he said, after a pause, as he gathered his papers together.

"Then have the goodness not to interfere between Ninon and me!" retorted the other hotly.

"You may be quite sure that we understand each other."

Brian's fine lips expressed some disdain.

"It is hardly worth while to take that tone with me any longer," he answered coldly. "I know that she has asked you for it, and that you have refused to give it up."

"Well, and what then? I repeat that we understand each other."

"And in repeating that assertion you wish to imply what does not exist," said the elder brother, with the same cool disdain.

"Since you will not give the ring to Ninon, I must ask you to give it to me."

The blood ebbed out of Quentin's face.

"What am I to make out of such an impertinence?" he said.

"Whatever you like. Only I want that ring."

The brothers stood and looked at each other in the dim light of the candle.

There was ill-concealed rage in Quentin's gaze.

Brian's eye was as cold and as keen as steel; it seemed to irritate the other still further.

"You do well," he said bitterly, "to make a parade of your power over the girl! It is not the first time that you have come between her and me with your confounded long face. But this time, at least you will find that my influence will be stronger than yours."

"I have not the faintest notion of what you mean," answered Brian quietly. "I have never interfered before, whatever my opinion may have been of your attitude towards Miss Masserene; I have kept it strictly to myself hitherto."

"You contented yourself with looking volumes," sneered his brother, growing more and more angry.

"What right have you to pass judgment upon me, or upon her, poor child? Has she been so happy, so well cared for that any one—least of all her own mother's people—should think themselves justified in pointing the finger of scorn at her?"

"I repeat that I have done nothing of the kind."

Quentin went on excitedly, not hearing this protest—

"Before ever I met her even, you had thrown a shadow over the girl's life!" he declared fiercely. "She was afraid of that fellow in the picture before she was afraid of you!"

"Pray don't let us be romantic!" put in Mr. Beaufoy, with a half-laugh.

"Romantic or not romantic, it is true!" Quentin went on hurriedly. "But you need not hope to gain anything, even when I am gone, as I shall be soon. If she is not for me, neither will she be for you! You may spare your pains."

Mr. Beaufoy drew himself up.

"It seems to me," he said curtly, "that you are taking an unjustifiable liberty in speaking of Miss Masserene in such a fashion."

"For Heaven's sake let us have no more of this."

"You will be good enough to give me that ring."

"No!" cried Quentin with an oath.

"There is only one man who has the right to ask for it.

"I deny your claim to meddle in this matter at all.

"Once before you robbed me of a few hours' joy with the woman I love as I have never loved, shall never love any other woman in the world! What was it I asked of her?

"A waltz, a smile, a word or two, and at sight of you, or of that fellow there whom you resemble so, she refused me that last request."

"What do you mean?" demanded Brian abruptly; and Quentin, beside himself with passion and jealous pain, began to pour forth the story of that moonlit night—was it months or years ago?—he hardly knew—when Ninon had tried to bid a gay defiance to the portrait which had acquired such a strange influence over her, and had fallen on her knees before it, scattering her bunch of jasmine at its feet, and sobbing out her penitence and her remorse.

It seemed a fantastic story; but even Brian Beaufoy could hardly hear it unmoved.

It was with quickening pulses that he tried to smile Quentin's feverish words away, and to make light of what he had heard.

"A girl's caprice?" he said.

"Why should you attribute the faintest meaning of importance to it? The character with which Ninon has chosen to invest me on the strength of my likeness to Colonel Denis over there is not such a flattering one that you need envy me.

"But, if I am such an awful bogy, I may as well act up to my reputation. Quentin, is there any need for words between us on the subject? You admit that your cause is hopeless.

"Give me that ring."

"No!" Quentin cried again with another and more furious oath. "You have no right to ask for it."

"How do you know?" demanded Brian gravely.

His brother turned and looked at him out of his wild blue eyes.

"What if I tell you that I have?"

"What!" cried the unhappy young fellow.

"You dare not say so! It would not be true! She is engaged. I tell you there is only one man who has the right to ask for the ring——"

"Hush!" said Brian quickly.

A soft sweeping of silk was coming through the distant curtains, and the faint glimmer of another candle.

The dark old curtains parted, and showed Ninon in her white dinner dress, and with white starry flowers in her black hair. She came along swiftly over the dark polished floor, starting at sight of the brothers and their disturbed faces.

"Come here, Ninon," said Mr. Beaufoy gently; his veins were still thrilling reluctantly at the recollection of Quentin's story. "I want you to tell Quentin that he is mistaken, that I have the right to demand that ring of yours which he is keeping from you against your will."

Ninon looked from one to the other, her breath coming fast, her cheeks as white as her gown.

"Is this true?" Quentin cried hoarsely. His fair hair was disordered, his blue eyes were full of misery.

"You told me the other day that you were engaged, Ninon.

"You would not give him up for me; but you have given him up for my elder brother."

She did not speak. She looked at him in voiceless pain.

Oh, what had she done? Was this more of her work?

"Is it true?" demanded Quentin again. "Has Brian the right he claims?"

She looked at Brian.

His face was dark and cold.

A sob rose in her throat.

"Yes," she said blankly; and Quentin pulled the ring from his finger with a sound of supreme contempt, and flung it upon the ground at her feet.

CHAPTER XXX.

THEY had already waited dinner some minutes for Quentin, when the butler came into the room with a message for Madame Du Mottay.

Ninon, who had been watching the door in speechless uneasiness and pain, guessed rather than heard that the man was announcing her cousin's departure to his mistress.

"What in the world is the meaning of this?" cried Florry, turning to Mr. Beaufoy who stood a little apart, his eyes fixed on Ninon's agitated face.

"What business can Quentin have to take him to London in such hot haste? Has he ever had any business in the world, in fact, except to amuse himself?"

"Perhaps," Brian answered coldly, "he finds that he can do better for the moment in London than here."

"My dear Brian, what a bad compliment you pay us all by such a supposition!" cried his sister, with a laugh.

"He certainly might have had the grace to let us know a little earlier, and not keep us all waiting for dinner! Five seconds more, and I should have begun to cry of hunger."

Brian was still watching Ninon. The girl was as pale as a ghost, and, as her eyes met his for a moment he saw that they were full of misery.

"For once Quentin has been wise," he thought, "for her as well as for himself. What could come of all this but wretchedness for them both?"

And yet he could not bear to see Ninon's sufferings during the few days that followed. The girl's fitful spirits and wan looks caused him a pang that he would not permit himself to define.

On the third evening after Quentin's sudden departure, as he was crossing the hall, he saw Ninon standing at the letter-box, which was outside the library door, and about to drop a letter into it.

She started when she saw him, and the letter fell upon the floor.

"Ah, you startled me!" she said, a great blush springing into her pale face as she stooped to pick up her fallen letter.

Mr. Beaufoy held her hand when she would have put the letter into the box.

"You have been writing to Quentin," he said abruptly.

She hung her head, all the bright color dying out of her cheeks.

She did not answer.

Brian watched her for some moments, and the two perpendicular lines between his brows began to show themselves most unmistakably.

"Why?" he demanded curtly.

She struggled for a few seconds.

His tone roused the sleeping devil of her pride.

Then, remembering, and making a strong effort, she said—

"Because he has written to me."

Mr. Beaufoy uttered an indignant exclamation, and took a few paces away from her side. The letter-box was free now, but the letter hung listlessly in Ninon's hand. She did not stir. He came back then, and opened the library door.

"Come in here for a moment," he said. "It will be better that we should understand each other."

She followed him in silence.

The library was deserted; a fire had been lit, the evening turning out chill, and there was only the low light of the flickering logs in the room. Mr. Beaufoy shut the door behind her, and they went and stood together by the hearth.

He did not speak for some moments; he was watching the girl's beautiful wretched face as she stood before him, dumb indifferent, waiting in her white gown, and with the letter in her hand.

"Ninon," he said at last, "Quentin has no business to write to you. You must not answer him."

"But you see I have answered him," she said.

Brian's face grew harder.

"You must not send the letter," he said.

She winced.

"Must not!" she repeated bitterly.

"It is you who must not speak to me like that. I have borne, I am bearing, a great deal. Don't try me too far!"

"What you are bearing is the fruit of your own perversity," he answered quickly, the two lines deepening between his dark brows. "Heaven knows I have not of myself assumed the right to interfere with your actions. It has been thrust upon me. I have accepted it most reluctantly."

"You need not have reminded me of it," the girl said, with the same bitterness. "I know well enough how distasteful everything is that connects you even for a while with me. But need you presume upon your strength and power over me, Mr. Beaufoy? Need you"—her voice trembled, a sob rose in her throat—"need you have compelled me to let Quentin go away thinking still worse of me, than I deserve?"

"I know nothing of Quentin's thought's about you," he answered coldly. "I only know that you have asked me to give you the shelter of my name in the absence of the man to whom you are engaged; and I assure you that I know how to make my name respected."

She swallowed her tears. How hard he was! Was it of any use for a woman to try to struggle with him, to beat her aching bosom against the firm unyielding rock of his will? She had put herself into his power, she must expect no mercy from his hands.

"What is it you want of me?" she asked, after a pause.

"I want you to understand you are not to correspond with Quentin. It is wrong to Mr. Strong first, and then to me."

"To you!" She broke into a bitter laugh. "You know that our engagement is a farce, a mockery."

"Happily for me," he replied.

The blood rushed to her delicate face.

"And yet you take a tone with me," she protested, "that even—even a husband would hardly be justified in assuming!"

"Our opinions on the subject of a husband's rights are evidently as dissimilar as they are on every other subject," was Mr. Beaufoy's unmoved response. "All this, Ninon is beside the question. I repeat that you have dragged me into a most odious position. I have consented to occupy it for the sake of your sister, and, in consenting, I warned you of my determination to exact from you the obedience you would owe me if our mock engagement were a real one, if you were indeed my promised wife, and I had the right to protect and guide you for life, instead of for a month or two."

She did not answer; and he turned in his walk up and down, and looked at her.

Her face was hidden with her hands, her breath was coming fast. She leaned tremblingly against the tall oaken mantelpiece.

"Come!" he said, with a little relenting in his cold voice. "Give me that letter, Ninon; I cannot allow you to send it."

She took her hands down from her face, and groped in a curious and dazed way for the chair behind her.

"No," she said, as she sank into it, shaking like a leaf—"not if I tell you that there is no harm in it, that it is a letter which ought to be sent."

"If it be such a letter as ought to be sent," he said firmly, "you can first show it to me.

"Open the envelope and let me read it. You see!"—as she crushed the letter in her hand, her face coloring brilliantly again. "You see that you are not prepared to stand such a test, Ninon. I must have that letter; I must have you promise that you will not write again."

"Let me send this one," she pleaded, as a sob rose in her throat. "Indeed it will be best. It will save me much pain afterwards. There is nothing in it you might read, only"—blushing and hesitating—"you judge me always so harshly; you see wrong when none is meant; you"—with a burst of passionate tears that were no longer to be held back—"you frighten and chill me! I would confide in you if you would let me—but I dare not!"

"Such confidences are very little to my taste," the young man answered frostily. "I must beg of you again to give me that letter."

She stood up then, her face hardening, her tears ceasing to flow.

"There it is then!" she said, suddenly flinging it into the fire. "You have refused to trust me. You have suspected and outraged me. It is you, and not I, who will be to blame if harm should come of it. I am tired of struggling with you. You are hard and strong and cold—and I am only a girl! You have no pity in you at all!"

"Ninon, be reasonable!" he said, taking her hand, as she passed him; but she broke away from him, and ran out of the room.

He stood and watched the letter smoulder away, and his face was very dark.

All the evening Ninon seemed in the wildest spirits. She danced and sang with indefatigable animation. She played cards and won quite a little heap of money, Mr. Beaufoy looking on in the gravest possible disapproval, as, with his sister, with whom gambling was a positive mania, she insisted on sitting up until a late hour, her cheeks burning and her eyes glittering with excitement, and declared that it would be wicked to interrupt such a run of luck.

She gathered up her pile of winnings with pretty exultation when at last she consented to go to bed, and prepared to follow Madame Du Mottay upstairs.

"What will you do with your ill-gotten gains, Miss Masserene?" asked Sir Harry, as he lit her candle.

"I will spend it all in tapers," she replied gravely, "to be burnt before a certain silver statute at the Mount Saint Michel."

"Not really?" the young Squire asked, puzzled.

"Yes, really," she said. "I never tell stories when I have on this gown, Sir Harry."

Sir Harry more puzzled than ever, turned his attention to the gown, but could make nothing of it.

"Why not?" he asked seriously; and Ninon, bursting into a little laugh, explained that it was because it was white.

"But you always wear white gowns!" declared the bewildered Squire.

"Yes," said Ninon. "But this one is trimmed with real lace!"

"Oh!" said the Squire blankly, as Miss Masserene, shrugging her shoulders, took her candle from him and turned away.

"Quentin is the only man in the world who understands nonsense," he heard her say to Madame Du Mottay, as she nodded a good night to Mr. Beaufoy.

"And how can you always be talking sense? It is too exhausting."

She went chattering and singing up the staircase with Florry, and then, as soon as she was safely locked into her own room, with a gesture of disgust and weariness, she flung down the money she had won, and fell upon her knees by her bed, sobbing as if her heart would break.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

ALONG THE LINE.

BY GEORGE MANVILLE FENN.

AUTHOR OF "BENEATH THE SEA" "UNDER WILD SKIES" ETC, ETC.

CHAPTER XIV.—[CONTINUED.]

YES; he said, in his kind and loving way, that you were going to be packed off, and if I didn't look out I should soon have to follow you."

"Never mind Bell," I said, "perhaps I shall soon get on another line, and if I do I'll put in a word for you."

"Thank you kindly, John Black; but I begin to think as I shan't want it. But that's neither here nor there. I've come to say as I'm off early to-night, and you may make your mind easy about that poor chap, for I'll see to him until you come."

It did make my mind easy; and on his going, I turned to my work more comfortably than I can explain.

Eight o'clock seemed to come quite soon, and then the time jumped to nine before I could realize the lapse; and I began to think of ten, and the coming of James Gummer.

"But let's hope Ned will be better by that time," I thought.

Then as the wind made the wires wail a doleful tune, and the box quivered in the wind, I felt disposed to laugh at my fears of the last night.

"That must have been Ned," I said to myself.

"He must have got out of the window after he had gone to his room. A sort of mad artifice, no doubt, and he must have been carrying this on, and frightened poor Bell and my relief man. Well, anyhow, he is safe to night, and——"

I stopped short, for I fancied I heard a soft crack behind me, like the moving of a window; but on looking around there was nothing to be seen, and I went on musing, but not in quite so happy a frame of mind as before.

I had a strange kind of fancy over me now that I was being watched—that a pair of eyes were staring hard at me, though on looking all round there was nothing to be seen.

The wire music sounded more doleful, and the wind moaned at the window cracks in a sighing, sobbing way.

"Oh, come," I said to myself. "This won't do. Nerves again."

"Ting! ting! ting!" went the bell; and I was glad to have the goods train coming in, to hang about for a quarter of an hour; but when it came in, for a wonder, there was nothing either to drop or pick up, and so it went on directly, so as to shunt at Beamish, and let the mail go by.

This made the place very dark and gloomy again, and I began to look out for the light engine; but, on glancing up at my clock I found that there was ten minutes to spare.

I was busily thinking away, when the fancy came upon me again that some one was watching me; and looking softly round there, in precisely the same place, and just where no face could be, was the same ghastly visage that I had seen the night before.

As I stood staring, I hit, as I thought, upon what it was.

My idea was that I had been so much with Ned, and had been so impressed with his fancies, that, unwittingly, my brain had taken to acting in a similar way; and until he was well, and I had had some change, I should have similar illusions.

The telegraph wire had told of the light engine coming, and I heard the shriek in the distance.

Then, on it came—nearer and nearer.

My signals were all right, and I was pressing on my lever, holding it firm, ready for the engine to curve off—and on it came, with a rush and a shriek, racing along at a merry rate; when, just as the noise was at its height, I seemed to hear the grating slide of a window sash behind me, and some one leaped on my back, pinioning my arms and, drawing a rope tightly around them, at the same moment that I was dragged back, and thrown on the floor.

I was so completely taken by surprise, that I proved an easy conquest. I was half stunned, too, by my head being driven forward upon the iron framework of the levers.

And as I lay there, with a dizzy sensation of lights dancing before my eyes, and something warm streaming over my face, I could hardly breathe for the knees pressed tightly on my chest.

Fortunately, I held the lever fast long enough for the engine to pass over the point.

But as I came a little to myself, I remembered the mail; and I knew that, if the lever was not shifted, the train would go on after the light engine, and there would be an accident.

"And only one here!" I thought, as I began to struggle for my liberty.

But whoever it was that had seized me had secured me tightly, with bandage after bandage, while I was half stunned; and now, leaping up with a cry of joy, and leaving me helpless, I saw who it was; for the light from my lamp fell full on the wild features of Ned Hassall.

"Ned," I cried in agony—"Ned, for God's sake, undo me!"

"At last—at last!" he muttered, with a wild look of joy in his distorted face. "Let him get on the mail now, and we'll see—we'll see.

"There!" he cried savagely—"I've caught you. I know. Look at that!"

"Man—Ned—place that back! You'll shunt the mail on the siding!"

"Yes," he cried, with a horrible laugh—"and it will all rush, engine, carriages, and all—on the stops, smash!

"That will kill him, John—that will kill him.

"I followed him down to night—I've followed him down every night—to the station, and seen him leap on to the engine, and I've tried to stop him; but he laughs at me; I shall laugh at him to night. There!"

He gave the bar another thrust, though it it was in its place before, and the effect would be as I said—the mail would dart off the down line on to a siding, a couple of hundred yards long, with a great stop of piled-up stones, and buffers in front; and with the great drops of sweat gathering on my face, I listened for the warning.

"Ned—Ned, my good fellow, unfasten me!" I cried.

"Lie still, John, and you shall see my revenge on the devil that haunted me," he cried.

"There will be a glorious smash, and I can drag his crippled body out of the ruins, It will be glorious."

I strove hard to free myself; and he, with gloating look went to the door opposite the window by which he had entered, threw it wide open, and looked out for the coming mail.

"Ting, ting!" went the bell; and in my horror I felt as mad as my assailant.

Why had I trusted Bell? Why did I do this foolish thing? God help me! how was I to get free?

I was freeing myself, though; and getting my arms out, I rose as he turned with a cry of joy—

"She's coming—she's coming!"

I made for the lever; but he saw my object, and with a yell he leaped at me, and we closed, struggling here and there, striking against boards, and I finding to my cost that in his madness, he was a stronger man than I.

If I could reach the lever, and hold to it, replaced, until the train had thundered by, I would not have cared.

But I could not get near it, and after a few seconds' struggle, I caught my foot, fell backwards, and with a savage laugh he thrust at me with all his force, and I was dashed out of the open door on to the platform, the handrail gave way, and I fell upon the ballast.

There were the station lights, and people moving on the platform; but it was of no avail to cry for help then, worse than useless to try to get back and renew the struggle.

With all a madman's cunning, the poor wretch had made his plans, and carried them out, and unless I could get to the other end of the siding to where there was another pair of points, and turn the mail back on to the down line, the ruin would be complete.

These thoughts take long to write, but an instant to flash through the brain.

And as I was thinking I was moving towards the siding, but slowly, and half stunned as I crept over the line, dragging after me a broken leg.

The signals were all right.

There was the distant, dull pant of the coming train, and I had two hundred yards to crawl, with my breath catching, and everything swimming round me.

I turned my head once, to see Ned looking at the open door.

By the time I was across the metals and crawling along the ballast, with every sleeper like a barrier to keep me back.

The swimming in my head increased, and a dread came over me that I should faint; but I kept on fighting bravely, till I had got over a hundred yards, when I felt that I could go no further.

I listened. There was not a sound in the lane, which was separated from where I was by the hedge; but the train was coming nearer.

Why was no one in pursuit of Ned?—why had they not watched him? God help me!—what should I do?

I made another try—got on a couple of yards—sank—struggled on again—sank again—got over the sleeper, determined to go on until the last; and ready, when the mail rushed by me on to destruction, to add my body to the general wreck.

The shriek of the train—and I was sixty yards away.

God help me!—I could get no further, I was fainting.

No; another yard—another.

"Bell!—Bell!—help!—for God's sake help!" I shrieked.

For I heard the patter of hurried feet on along the lane on the other side of the hedge.

What followed seems now like a misty dream; but I was awake to the danger, and shouted again, heard above the roar of the coming train; for Bell's voice answered.

"Here, quick, over the hedge!" I shrieked, and he burst through as the train was at the station.

"What, what is it?" he panted.

"Distant points—siding—shunt!"

Bell's quick eye, used to scan for danger, saw that something was wrong, and that I was pointing on; so he ran, looking back and seeing the mail swerve on to the siding.

And then he ran for life.

So close was he beset, that, as he forced the lever from him with all his might, the engine thundered by—the whole curving off again on safety.

CHAPTER XV.

COMING-TO.

A MISTY feeling of annoyance came on me as I recovered, because some one was splashing water in my face.

Then, like a flash, came the recollection of the endangered train, and I made a start to get up; but such a pain ran through me that I fell back with a sigh.

"Lie still, John," said a well known voice. "I'll send for some one to help you. I'm afered your thigh is broke."

"The train?" I said.

"As nigh a shave as ever I knew," said Bell.

"I thought it was all over. Points stuck.

"Ain't been used for months. Only just in time."

"Where's Hassall?"

"Don't know mate. It's so dark, I can't see how far he's gone.

"He came down from the signal-box yelling horrid, and ran on after the train down the line.

"But he won't catch it."

"But he'll meet the up mineral?"

"If he goes on that line, he will; but he's too artful, bless you.

"He punched up the clothes and bolster, of make them look like him laying there, while I was out of the room a minute; and when I came back, to find, as he'd slipped out."

"You should have watched him close, Bell."

"I did, mate—I did; but he seemed so sound asleep, I thought it was all right. As soon as I did miss him, I ran off for to tell you."

"Get help—carry me to the goods shed—doctor," I said.

"But I can't leave you, mate, in the dark. Ah, I knowed something 'ud happen, but I thought it was to me."

He moved me as tenderly as a woman would a child, poor fellow!—and him with one arm!

He took off his jacket, then doubled it, and laid it under my head, before leaving me lying there in the dark upon the ballast, with his jacket and a sleeper for my pillow, listening to his steps as he ran off, and seeing, as in a dream, the signals and station lights in the distance.

Then a strange mist came over me again, and I fancied I heard shouting.

Hassall seemed to seize me once more, after glaring at me through the glass of the signal-box. Then came the roar and rush of the train; the ground trembled, and it seemed to be coming down to cut me up into pieces, and I felt the shock.

It bore me along, dragged me about, tossed me up, threw me down, and then the wheels tore at my leg, and cut it to pieces.

Then I have a burning recollection of being sorry for poor Bell, because Ned Hassall and the thing that troubled them so would stand still on the line, refusing to help him, while he picked me up bit by bit in a clothes basket, and then carefully sprinkled the line from the sand-box.

It was a curious, wild state of feeling that I was in, things being horribly jumbled together—trains smashing up against the stops, Ned Hassall struggling with a demon.

There was I hurling him down from the signal-box, and then following to lay him across the line, for the wheels to go over his legs and break them, before leaping with his victim on to the mail train, and cramming the body—that was sometimes I, and sometimes the demon—into the roaring flames of the furnace, when only one leg would burn, and Ned Hassall shrieked with horror at the sight.

Then there was another change, and Miss Lint came, to sit and mop and mow at me in her carriage, saying—

"I told you so, I told you so.

"You've killed all the people in the world, and they were in that train. I told

you so, I told you so. He's coming round."

"He's coming round!"

Her words seemed to ring in my ears still; and I opened my eyes, to find that it was not Miss Lint who spoke, but the surgeon, standing over me where I lay on a mattress in—yes—no—in the first-class waiting-room, with lanterns burning; and Todd, and Bell, and James Gummer, all were there.

I put my hand up to my forehead in a puzzled way, as I looked at the doctor, who had his sleeves rolled up.

"That's right," he said, cheerily. "We shall do now."

"Have you taken it off?" I asked, looking him hard in the face.

"Off, my man—off? Oh, no," he said, laughing.

"It's a bad fracture of the femur, but I've got it set all right."

So he nodded and left the waiting-room, where I lay thinking of my misty, delirious dreams, and ended by going off into others quite as wild; and then all seemed very blank, till I awoke in a room that I did not know, and lay wondering what it all meant—for the room was handsomely furnished, in a quaint old style, and at the slightest motion the heavy, silk-covered wooden fringe round the bed canopy rattled and swayed.

CHAPTER XVI.

WITH THE STREAM.

LIFE seemed to glide away calmly at Aunt Lint's, and I was getting very happy.

As I came to understand her better, I found under her harsh ways something very lovable; and by degrees, the old-fashioned servants—who had, I fancied, slightly resented my coming—sent me more than once to my room to have a quiet cry, they were so thoughtful and kind.

The first I knew of that change towards me was one morning I was going downstairs, when I was the unwilling hearer of a sharp quarrel between Dolly and cook, and, to my surprise, I found that I was the subject.

Cook, it seemed, had the habit of leaving doubled-up door-mats, pails of water, and brooms, in unexpected places during cleaning-time, and Dolly was attacking her thereon.

"You'd like her poor dear, with no eyes to see to fall over one of your nasty pails, and break her dear legs so you would," cried Dolly, in one breath.

"Which I just shouldn't," said cook, indignantly.

"I'd sooner break my own; so there now, ma'am."

I retreated, so as to hear no more; but simple as the incident was, in my own weak state it affected me.

That afternoon Kate came over with little Vi, when aunt ordered her carriage, and left Kate and me together.

"How queer of her!" said Kate.

"So rude to go away like that. But Jenny, darling, you must be very uncomfortable.

"Do let me take you back."

"I'm very happy, Kate," I said, putting my arm around her—"and so much more to find your letters told the truth, and that you are a great deal better."

"Why, you can't see, dear," she cried.

"No," I said, smiling sadly.

"I cannot see; but God has been very good to me, and made up my loss to me in other ways.

"I can feel that you are a great deal better and stronger.

"I can read it in your voice, in the touch of your hand, in your more elastic manner."

"You dear, good, patient girl!" she said, throwing herself sobbing in my arms.

"How can he be such a wretch?"

"Who?" I said, wonderingly.

"Such nasty, mean, unmanly behaviour, trying in every way he can to wriggle out of his engagement.

"Frank says he'll never speak to him again.

"He's always now hanging about at the Wilkinsons.

"Just as if Carry Wilkins, if she was as full of eye as a peacock, would be equal to my darling sissy."

"Oh, hush, Kate!" I said, laying my hand upon her lips.

"I have grown to look upon all that as dead and gone.

"It would have been unjust to him to hold him to his engagement.

"It is better as it is.

"I want for nothing.

"I am very happy.

"Let that die about Mr. Stacey; and ask Frank, for my sake, to be friends with him again.

"Recollect, I am blind."

"But won't you never see the pitty lowers again?" cried little Vi.

"Never, darling, never," I said, sobbing; for I was so easily moved just now.

"Yes, yes, yes," I cried, recovering myself, and catching the darling in my arms, "I shall see them with your little eyes, and you shall tell me all about them when we go for our walks."

Then in a whisper I said to Kate—

"Go now, dear. I'm only weak yet."

After making me promise to write and let her fetch me soon, Kate took darling little Vi, and they went away, leaving me to go and sob in my own room as if my heart would break—for I was not happy.

There was an aching void in my poor heart; and I felt that it would never, never more be filled.

CHAPTER XVII.

MISS LINT'S LUCK

WE were at breakfast next morning, and aunt, as usual, skimmed the paper while I poured out the tea.

"Plenty of politics, Jenny; plenty of parliamentary talk, and very little done. Bah! disgraceful.

"New branch railway from Grumpton to Stullieby.

"Well, what is it, Dolly? what do you want? Where are the men?"

"Horridaccidentonthisrailmum," said Dolly, in one breath.

"But where—when?

"Oh, here's Edmunds.

"Go away, Dolly."

The woman went, and the butler spoke—

"Which I was coming to tell you, ma'am, only the housemaid ran in first."

"Well, speak, man—what is it?"

"Something to do with last night's mail, ma'am; only one man hurt, and he's lying at the station."

"Carriage directly," said my aunt.

"I shall not take you, child," she continued.

"Now we'll finish our breakfast; those people will be half an hour."

She sat down again without a word; and though I spoke to her she did not answer, neither did I hear her cup chink.

At the end of five minutes she rang for her things, dressed, and, in about the time she named, the carriage came round.

"Jenny, my child," she said at parting—"tell Dolly to get the blue room ready while I'm gone."

The blue room was the bed-room on the ground floor that was to have been prepared for me, as my aunt said, but it was not done; and after giving the necessary orders, I sat listening for the return of the carriage.

At last it came, and as I stood in the hall there was a buzz of men's voices, among which was that of my dear doctor, Mr. Levigne.

"Hadn't you better go in, child?" said my aunt.

"Mind, be careful!"

For there was a faint groan uttered from some one, and it went to my heart like a pang of sharp pain.

"I cannot see, aunt," I said, gently.

So I stood there while some one was carried, under Mr. Levigne's directions, to the blue room.

Then there was the trampling of feet on the stone floor, the door was shut, and the carriage rumbled away.

"We did it very cleverly, my dear," said my aunt, excitedly.

"They had shutters in the carriage, and a mattress on them, and we brought him here, where he shall stay till he's well. Ah! another victim to railways."

"Is he much hurt, aunt?" I said.

"Leg broken badly, my child," said my aunt, tearing off her things.

"I was in hopes there would have been more.

"They should all have come, as an example to the railway company."

"There is no one else hurt, then?" I said, joyfully.

"No, child," she said, snappishly, "But you needn't be so pleased."

"Who is it, aunt?" I said, to turn the conversation—"a passenger?"

"Gracious, no, child! It's my signalman—and the train was not hurt at all.

"I've not got the rights of it yet; but it seems something to do with a mad friend of his called Ned."

"*Ned!*"

"Why, what is it, child?

"Any one would think Ned was your sweetheart."

"Nothing, aunt, nothing. I—I—

"Now, what is it, child? Tell me," she said, taking me in her arms.

"You may confide in me."

"It was a silly fancy of the past, aunt," I said, blushing till my face burned.

"I once knew some one of that name."

"Poor little bird!" she said, tenderly, and she kissed my eyelids.

"Well, we won't mention the name again."

In the course of the day things settled down; the doctor came again twice, and all was said to be going on rightly.

Aunt instituted herself the nurse, and I was ordered not to go near the room.

Then news came from the station how the signalman had been very brave, and saved the mail, after being attacked by a madman who tried to turn it off the line.

It was from Mr. Levigne, though, that we heard the rest of the affair—how the madman was ill at a porter's cottage; that he was a dreadful drunkard, and had drink-madness, and had done this to his friend in his delirium, and then ran for miles after the train, to drop at last, exhausted, close to Beamish station.

This was the man they called Ned; and when his name was mentioned in connection with his friend, in spite of thinking of the folly, it gave me a pang, and set me thinking.

Could this be the Ned I had known?

My aunt never went to the station now, but we used to take drives in the afternoon; for she devoted her mornings to her patient—as she called him.

These duties seemed to afford her real pleasure; and although I often wanted to relieve her, she would not let me.

"No, child; you shall go in and see—there, tut! I mean go in and talk to him some day, for he is a very respectable young man, and quite a scholar."

He used to have visitors, and my aunt took great interest in them.

One was Mrs. Crookes, who, it seems, had been nursing the poor man who drank so, but was now better; and another was the one-armed porter, who was an especial pet of my aunt.

"Poor fellow! he was a nice, civil, honest-spoken man, who always softened his voice and spoke to me in a pitying whisper, as if afraid of hurting me by shouting too loud.

"Lost his arm shunting, my child," said my aunt before him one day.

"There, Mr. Crookes will let you feel."

"Oh, no, aunt," I said.

"Nothing to be ashamed of, child.

"I have been proposing to Mr. Crookes that I should allow him a pension, and hold him up as an example of railway humanity."

"Wait till I loses t'other arm, or my legs, mum, and then I'll thank you kindly," exclaimed the sturdy Englishman.

"I ain't no call to want a pension now."

"We will, Crookes, we will," said my aunt, eagerly; and the man went away.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

ANIMALS AND HUMAN SPEECH.—A writer in the *Journal of Science* deals with the interesting subject of the attempts of certain of the lower animals to acquire human speech. In the first place the observer is struck by the curious fact that the most successful attempts of this nature have been made not by the animals that usually rank nearest to humanity, but by certain birds.

A Frenchman tells of a dog that can pronounce the words *ma maman*. Considering the intelligence of dogs, it is perhaps a matter of surprise that such stories are not commoner. It has been suggested that the cause may be in the difference in structure of the vocal organs. At all events, the lower mammalia as a rule do not learn human speech. It is the parrot and not the monkey that learns to talk. This has struck the observant negro, who is said to have a theory that the monkey can speak but will not do so, lest he should be made to work. If the monkeys had arrived at this generalization, they would soon find that even the mutes must do something in the complex organization of civilized life.

It is clear, however, that in addition to the possession of certain physiological and mental characteristics an animal must be in close contact with man before he can be expected to become familiar with his speech. It is evident that the animals that would appear most promising for such an experiment are not available for the purpose. They do not increase in captivity, and hence the hereditary influences of selective development carried on for generations is entirely absent. It is gravely doubted by some whether the birds that imitate the speech of man have any perception whatever of the meaning of the words they use.

Do they employ their phrases with definite purpose or intention, or do they merely reproduce what they hear, as a boy may imitate the quack of a duck or a grunt of a pig?

The writer of the article mentioned recites the case of a parrot which always preferred the petition, 'Give Polly a bit, if you please,' when she saw that food was being prepared—but did not offer that observation at any other time.

He also mentioned a magpie at Stowmarket that knew and used with accuracy the names of several members of the family. The Abbe Gras has two parrots that use general phrases with strict appropriateness. When a supply of seeds is given to Coco she cries "Here is something good." If her companion screams he says, "Come, Cocotte, don't scream; sing." If her request is complied with she patronizingly observes, "You sing well; oh, very well!" M. Gras was giving some directions to his housekeeper when Coco interjected, "Now; don't you understand?"

Intelligent parrots occasionally vary their phrases, and, like children who are learning to talk, never speak of themselves in the first person. The child calls itself "Baby," as the parrot styles itself "Polly." The bird and the child alike puzzle and blunder in coming over a new phrase, and have especial difficulty in mastering the final part of the sentence. Considering what an individual can accomplish, it would be rash to limit the possibilities of that which might be if generation after generation of clever parrots were hatched.

"Perhaps," says the writer, "in these days of cram and of the equal rights of animals we may in five centuries have magpies in the fifth and sixth standards, macaws preparing for the examination of the Science and Art Department, and cockatoos—sweet bird graduates—taking their degrees at the University of London."

NATURE'S GIFTS.—In the distribution of her gifts nature appears to have acted on the law of compensation. Those flowers that inhale the most fragrant perfumes rarely present to the eye the most brilliant colors; and the greatest minds do not always dwell in the most perfect bodies. Æsop, Pope, Oberkampf, Marshal Luxembourg, were hunchbacks; Tyrteus, Shakespeare, Byron, Walter Scott, Tamerlane, Benjamin Constant, were lame; lastly, Scarron compared his deformed body to the letter Z. It is a matter of daily observation that hunchbacks are rarely stupid. At all times men of stunted growth have been the most highly gifted with intellectual power. Victor Hugo, speaking of Charlemagne, says that he was one of those very rare men who are, at the same time, large men.

A MAN'S personality has a powerful subtle influence on all with whom he comes in contact. It will readily be seen, therefore, how necessary it is for us to cultivate an agreeable personality.

Scientific and Useful.

NEW COIN.—Nickle is proposed to be a substitute for bronze in coinage in France. It is also suggested that the new coins shall be octagonal instead of round, so that the people may not mistake them for silver in the hurry of business.

PAINT.—Paint, to last long, should be put on early in winter or spring, when it is cold and no dust flying. Paint put on in cold weather forms a body or coat upon the surface of the wood that becomes hard and resists weather, or an edged tool even, like slate.

POTATO CELLULOIN.—If potatoes are peeled and treated with eight parts sulphuric acid and 100 parts of water, and then dried and pressed, a mass is obtained very much like celluloid, and which can be used instead of meerschaum or ivory. It is not stated whether the invention is protected by a patent or not.

MILDEW AND LINEN.—Mildew may be removed by mixing with soft-soap a little powdered starch, half the quantity of salt, and the juice of a lemon, and applying it to the mildew stain with a paint-brush, on both sides of the linen. The stained article should then be left out on the grass day and night until all traces of the spot have disappeared.

PUTTY.—The following method of softening putty is useful to those having hardened putty to remove from sashes: Take soda or potash—the latter being preferable—dissolve it in water and mix the solution with fresh-burnt, fresh-slaked lime. After the mixture has stood for a time pour off the clear fluid and bottle for use. Putty moistened with this quickly softens and is easily removed.

HARNESS.—Washing harness with warm water and soap will injure the leather. All varnishes and blacking containing the properties of varnish are injurious. When harness becomes rusty give a new coat of grain black. Before applying this, wash the grain of the leather with potash-water, cold, until all the grease is removed. After the leather is quite dry apply the grain black, and then oil and tallow. This fastens the color, and makes the harness flexible and soft. Grained harness can be cleaned by a cloth moistened with kerosene, but should be immediately washed and oiled after the operation.

TREE-PLANTING.—That many land-owners are aware of the importance of this question of tree-planting, more especially on its bearing on the rainfall of a particular district we must acknowledge. But there are many whose sole idea of the value of timber is governed by the price which it will fetch in the market, and unfortunately such persons do not remember to plant trees where they cut down old ones. We have a noble example to the contrary in a former Duke of Athols, who was one of the most extensive tree-planters in the world. It is said that during his useful life he planted no fewer than 27,000,000 trees, covering 15,000 acres.

Farm and Garden.

BREEDING.—As the influence of male animals is more strongly impressed on the offspring than that of the female, it is important that undue care be exercised in the selection of males for improvement. One with a doubtful lineage should always be avoided.

FOOD FOR COWS.—Wheat bran and oil-cake meal, combined in a proportion by weight of two of bran to one of meal, is an excellent feed for cows giving milk. A larger proportion of meal will too rapidly fatten the animals. If quantity of milk only is desired, the proportion of bran may be increased.

FRUITS.—Every farmer should grow plenty of small and orchard fruits. When perfectly ripe they are healthful, and will keep the system in good order; but half-ripe fruit is to be shunned. A nice row of blackberries, raspberries, currants, and the like around the garden-fence affords substantial enjoyment.

CUCUMBERS.—A Wisconsin gardener, on the strength of experience, commends to townspeople who want fresh cucumbers, the practice of growing them in a barrel partly sunk in the back-yard, filled half full of manure, and the remainder with soil, seeds planted on the surface, and vines dropping over the sides.

PRUNING TREES.—In pruning trees all stems half an inch or more in diameter should be covered with some waterproof substance like grafting-wax or shellac, of the consistency of cream. The bark and outer wood will thus be preserved, and the wound will in a season or so be covered with new bark. If this precaution be not taken the end of the branch will decay from exposure.

GROWING PLANTS.—The more freely a plant is growing the more water will it require; and the more it grows the more light and sun will it need. In all cases those which seem to grow the fastest should be placed nearest the light. The best position for room-plants is in the southeast. They seem like animals in their affection for the morning sun. The first morning ray is worth a dozen in the evening. Should any of our fair readers find her plants, by some unlucky calculation, frozen in the morning, do not remove them at once to a warm place, but dip them in cold water and set them in a dark spot, where they will barely escape freezing. Sunlight will only help the frost's destructive powers.

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SIXTY-SECOND YEAR.

SATURDAY EVENING, MARCH 2, 1895.

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THOROUGHNESS.

Education has to work on the mind, and it has to set the mind to work for itself. But all too often it busies itself almost entirely with memory. Words are repeated, or read, and the main thing is to commit them to memory. But the memory is only one of the forms in which the intellectual faculty works. There are besides observation, judgment, imagination and reasoning. There are forms of mental activity where we are dealing with qualities in others, in estimation, affection, along the whole range of calm feelings, warm emotions, overmastering passions.

And there is the other form of mental activity described as the will, through which power is set in motion, decisions are made, and character is formed. What a mere fragment of education one has in whom memory has been almost exclusively engaged!

But to turn to the reason or intellectual faculty in its own immediate process of forming judgments. Shall I buy a particular house? As I try to come to a conclusion, or make up my mind, how varied are the elements in my effort! I have certain intuitions; for instance, I must pay for it if I would have it; and I must set about getting the house. Experience is an element—my own and that of others. Some have found a house a good, but some a bad thing. Reasoning has to be gone into, and this involves the science of logic, with all the processes of major and minor premises and conclusions. How can one be thoroughly educated who knows nothing of a process through which he must go a thousand times a day, and on so many different varieties of subject?

Nor is he left to abstract, simple, unhindered action. It would be easy, comparatively, if the invisible locomotive had only to run along the well-defined rails of known facts and premises. But, alas! it is not so. There are side-forces, appetites, tastes, inclinations—perhaps passions; and as a sailor in managing his ship and keeping on his course has to allow for currents of air and of water, and even of "the way" of the the ship; so the poor, bewildered man has to take into his calculations all these disturbing forces.

And then the house! It is composed of physical materials, discernible by the senses and of endless complication. If one is to know about it in any thorough way, how many departments of knowledge he must touch? There are several senses, doors, by several of which floods can, and must, enter his mind. How does it look to the eye, feel, smell, the last being no unimportant matter?

The wide region of physics is now to be entered. Brick, stone, mortar, timber, lead, air, light, space, not to speak of gas and the innumerable processes of the kitchen, all fall under his notice, and must be thought of. And he is not at the end of the matter when he knows the relative values of the materials. How are they put together? Here mechanics loom up. He may find specialists, to be sure, but he is at their mercy if he is entirely ignorant of the whole matter.

Then there is the title, and the laws—ah, me! one despairs! Can one become thoroughly educated? and this is only a part. We have not said a word of experience spread out on the field of history, nor of imagination expatiating over all the region from mathematics to poetry, from Euclid and Aristotle to Bryant and Tennyson. Nor have we carried the mind in the material field beyond this small globe—nor touched the astronomer's universe, nor gone into the geologist's bygone cycles, nor even hinted at the treasures hid in the many-tongued books.

What is the conclusion of the whole matter? There is not one of us thoroughly educated.

SANCTUM CHAT.

IN Prussia the Minister of Education has issued an order that all the boys at the high schools shall be made to play games for physical exercise. Here orders in the contrary direction seem to be needed to keep the boys from play.

—

THE English Army and Navy Gazette says: "We understand that the Prince of Wales, at the urgent request of the Princess of Wales, is bestirring himself to put down the sport of 'pigeon shooting.' The ladies have formed a ring, and intend 'boycotting' Burlingham until the Gun Club discards the 'pretty dove' and adopts the 'terra cotta pigeon,' a new invention which is being brought out under the patronage of the Prince of Wales, and can be seen at work at the Ranelagh Club grounds.

—

BISMARCK, the German premier, is subject to fits of dejection, when he declares that his life has been a failure; that he has never made any one happy—neither himself, his family, or the nation at large. "If it were not for me," he once said, when in a despondent mood, "the world would have seen three great wars less, and eighty thousand who died in their bloom might have lived, and how many parents, brothers, sisters, and widows would have been spared their grief and tears!"

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THE most amusing feature of a full-dress rehearsal of a fashionable wedding is the regulating the gait at which the young couple are to proceed up the aisle. Sometimes the bride and bridegroom go up the aisle a dozen different times, with different steps and degrees of rapidity, before they hit upon what their circle of relatives and near friends think the correct thing. The bride often tries half a dozen positions and many more expressions. In one position she leans a little forward: in another she walks erect; whether she carries her head on the right or left hand side is considered important. The way the veil looks best; the adjustment of the train at the altar so that she can turn around easily; the proper attitude in coming back—these and various other matters have to be considered and marked out carefully in advance. These rehearsals are of recent growth.

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THE men who go from house to house at this time of the year collecting the returns of births, as is required by law, meet with some queer experiences. One of them who was at work a while ago in a neighboring city came to a house owned by two elderly maidens of means. The hired girl answered his ring, and he made his usual stereotyped remark: "I called to see if there were any births in this house last year." For some reason the domestic failed to understand him, and made this report to her mistresses: "There is a gentleman down stairs who wants to know if you had any bursts last year." They hurriedly discussed the possible meaning of such a query, and concluded that it must refer to the water pipes. Then one of the women went down to the door and asked the canvasser if he had authority to ask such questions. He said that he was acting under the law, whereupon she remarked: "Well, we did have a little one here, but it was so slight we were not obliged to call in outside help."

—

WHO first invented and reduced incandescent electric lighting to anything like practical application? It does not appear that the honor belongs to M. de Chagny, who, as his friends claim, came forward with his device only 20 years ago. Mr. W. Mattie Williams shows that King had taken out a patent in England in 1845 for the incandescent lamp of the then young American, Mr. Starr, which is thus described in a letter to the *Nature* of January 11: "A short stick of gas-retort carbon was used, and the vacuum obtained by connecting one end of this with a wire sealed through the top of a barometer tube blown out at the upper part, and the other end with a wire dipping into the mercury. The tube was about 36 inches long, and thus the enlarged and upper portion became a torrecellian vacuum when the tube was filled and inverted." "And," continues Mr. Williams, after stating the several places at which he himself had exhibited the result of the invention, "the light was far more brilliant and the carbon more durable than that of flimsy threads of incandescent lamps now in use." He adds that the reason of abandoning the Starr lamp was solely on account of the cost of the power.

—

A PHYSICIAN, who has made a special study of the phenomena of death, both through his personal observations and those of others, says his conclusion is that the dissolution is painless. "I mean," he explains, "that it approaches as unconsciously as sleep. The soul leaves the world as painlessly as it enters it. Whatever be the cause of death, whether by lingering malady or sudden violence, dissolution comes either through syncope or asphyxia. In the latter case, when resulting from disease, the struggle is long protracted and accompanied by all the visible marks of agony which the imagination associates with the closing scene of life. Death does not strike all the organs of the body at the same time, and the lungs are the last to give up the performance of their functions. As death approaches, the latter gradually become more and more oppressed; hence the rattle. Nor is the contact sufficiently perfect to change the black venous into the red arterial blood; an unprepared fluid consequently issues from the lungs into the heart, and is thence transmitted to every other organ of the body. The brain receives it, and its energies appear to be lulled thereby into sleep—generally tranquil sleep—filled with dreams which impel the dying to murmur out the names of friends, and the occupations and recollections of past life."

—

THE dispersion of a name as a thing of census is worth a note. From the seven sons of the first Dutch Livingston, in New York, there could be, if in succeeding generations the sons were as many, tens of thousands of Livingstons to-day, and it would appear from the social news that there must be as many. Take any of the early Norman nobles of England 700 years ago, when such names as Arundl (Randall), Stanley, Howard, Townsend and Vere began, and the regular increase of younger sons would almost make nations. In 700 years there are 2,100 generations; seven sons in the second generation would make 49, in the third 343, in the fourth 2,401, in the seventh 117,649. While there is also death, the increase is independent of it. Of course the sex divides nearly in half, yet even the half increase finally becomes incomputable. That may be why so many prenoms are given to aristocratic elder sons, like Henry Weysford Charles Plantagenet Rawdon Hastings, a real name and the last of an extinct peerage. When the world was young, it was, "Hello, Ham!" "How are you, Shem!" But now the census so absorbs distinctions that it has to be Gwendolina-Hyacintha Roma-Roger Norman-Rodulph Montague-Plantagenet Vaux,—also a real name.

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ARE many Londoners aware of the extent of landed and house property at present possessed in the metropolis by members of the upper house? A map of London showing the proportions of land thus held would not be uninteresting. Of course every schoolboy knows that the Duke of Westminster owns the larger portion of the city of Westminster, and possesses Grosvenor Square and the fashionable district of Belgravia. An equally large slice of the metropolis belongs, however, to the Duke of Portland, who is the fortunate owner of Cavendish Square, Portland Place, Bentinck street, Welbeck street, Harley street, Cavendish street, Vere street, Holles street and Bolsover street. Francis Charles Hastings Russell, ninth Duke of Bedford, Marquis of Tavistock and Baron Russell possesses the whole of the parish of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, including the deservedly much-abused Market, and such thoroughfares as Tavistock, Russell and Bedford streets, and His Grace owns another large slice of property in Bedford Square, Russell Square, Tavistock Square, and Woburn Square. William Douglas, fourth Marquis of Northampton, owns a thickly-populated district about Islington and Clerkenwell, and the boy-Marquis Camden is the ground-landlord of Camden Town. To this list must be added the London property of the Marquises of Salisbury and Exeter, who between them own two-thirds of the Strand. A considerable portion of the Strand between the Savoy and Charing Cross is also owned by the Earl of Craven, who is the fortunate proprietor of valuable property in Bayswater. Craven street, Strand and Craven Gardens, Bayswater, both derive their names from the title of the ground-landlord who is their fortunate owner. Viscount Portman's landed estate in London is also a fair slice of Cobbett's great wen.

SNOWDRIFTS.

BY CLARA THWAITES.

Listen to the plaintive stories
  Sung by moorland winds to-day!
Dirges ring o'er vanished glories,
  Love and hope have flown away.
Where are summer's airy minstrels,
  Where, our warblers debonair?
Can they sing one strain prophetic,
  Can they consolation bear?

Guild of faith! What promise golden
  Nestles 'neath your drooping wing!
We would bear its balm enfolden
  In our hearts until the spring.
Saith it, "Not a sparrow falleth
  On the dreary, dreary snows,
But its cry to Heaven calleth,
  And our Heavenly Father knows?"

I am caught in crystal showers,
  Feathery flakes and fairy blooms,
Winter flings her scentless flowers
  O'er her dark, unlovely tombs!
Airy whispers float around me,
  "Trust His love and perfect rule,
Though his keenest arrows smite thee,
  Lo! He giveth snow like wool."

Royal touch and flashing token
  Kingly presence here reveal,
Faith in Him may be unbroken,
  Love may smile in woe of weal.
By the splendor of His pathway—
  Diamond flash in triple ray—
Sure I am that he is near me,
  That a King hath passed this way!

Better Forget.

BY WILSON BENNOR.

I SHALL never be the heroine of a romance with such a horrid name—Jemima—so I may as well begin to be practical."

And the young girl tied the ripples of her soft brown hair under an old grey veil, and seizing a duster, began energetically putting the house to rights.

"I declare, Jem, you have helped me a lot to day," said Mrs. Murray, toiling up to her chamber for her afternoon's nap. "You can be very handy, if you want to."

Commendation so pleasant, that Jem's impulses to be practical and useful was then strengthened.

"It's a great deal nicer doing people some good than moaning over books that make me dissatisfied with myself and with everybody else," she mused.

And as the girl really had native executive ability, she soon became very skilful in the care and management of the house and cooking; and finally, as her mother became an invalid, efficient in the sick-room.

And when she was praised, she would reply—

"Well, I couldn't be romantic with my name, you know."

It was just the same when rapidly accumulating riches—the result of her good father's mercantile sagacity—made Jem a lady of fortune.

She was not beautiful or accomplished—she was not a genius or talented in any way whereby she could distinguish herself in the world, but she was busy and happy; her mother's comfort, her father's companion, and the valued aid of very many people less fortunate than herself.

She was pretty and charming too, with a healthful cheek, pleasant brown eyes, and a gracious manner.

Miss Jem Murray was popular.

She was especially a favorite with her mother's physician, old Dr. Messenger, who familiar with her face and ways, and fully aware of her father's wealth, pondered the facts in his heart, and finally chose to absent himself from Mrs. Murray's sick room, and send his young nephew, Eustace, in his stead.

A very handsome young man of seven and twenty, this Dr. Eustace Messenger, apparently perfect in face, manner, and his dress.

Jem's brown eyes widened at his entrance with involuntary pleasure.

"My uncle sent me to day as his substitute, if you will accept of my services," he said, with exquisite enunciation and courtly manner.

The invalid opened her eyes to smile a ready acceptance.

The change was gladly received in the monotony of the sick room, the chronic disease admitting of little alleviation and being marked by great tedium; and the young doctor endorsed by the old one, seemed to bring new hope.

"Umph! nice-looking enough. Healthy, good-tempered, and no nonsense about her which is more than can be said of most rich men's daughters. Capable and handy too, I observe; would make an excellent wife for me, sure enough. I wonder if old Murray is worth a hundred thousand?—and was she impressed?" mused Dr. Eustace, stroking at his gloves, and pulling his moustache, as he passed down the avenue.

Jem was a little impressed.

The young man's appearance, and the character in which he came, awoke in her involuntary approval.

There was no reason why she should be insensible to a handsome presence, and his calling too, clothed him with more than a brief authority to command her respect.

Jem was not elaborate in the expression of her ideas, and she often said "she liked doctors."

It was very true that the character of the profession always recommended itself to her in a marked manner.

There are such terrible extremes of human anguish.

Jem had never doubted that a doctor was always a good man—one worthy to counsel as well as control the body's sickness.

They needed to be, and were, she thought, sagacious to understand and minister to the weakness of hearts with courage undermined by weary pain.

So the young doctor was invested by her with a sort of halo.

"He isn't the least bit like all the young men about town of course—cousin Gus and the rest—or he wouldn't have undertaken the responsibilities of a doctor.

"Don't you like him mother?" asked Jem.

"Yes, dear; he's exceedingly polite. And I think he's helping the pain in my side. Isn't it time for me to take my drops?" answered the invalid, who of late had no thought beyond her physical needs.

The senior physician had gone up to the mountains for his health now, and his patients, who chanced not to be so many or dangerously indisposed, were left entirely to the care of the other.

Jem and Dr. Eustace saw a great deal of each other.

Dr. Eustace was very elegant and accomplished.

Jem discovered that he was very popular with the young ladies, and he too observed she was beloved by all.

Later, Jem was ashamed that she felt an incipient pang of jealousy one night when he played and sang a very charming duet with her cousin.

But he came to her side at the close of the evening, and asked permission to walk to her father's door with her in the next square.

It being the first marked act of courtesy he had shown her, Jem, gratified, grew thoughtful.

Was he not agreeable to her beyond any young man she had known.

By-and-by Dr. Messenger came back.

"Well, sir," he remarked, looking over his spectacles at his nephew, "how are you getting on with the young lady?"

"As well, sir, as I could expect," laughed the young gentleman. "You have only been gone a month."

"You like her!"

"Very much!" sincerely.

"And she likes you?"

"It is to be hoped so. But I have not yet spoken of it of course, uncle Godfrey. She is not that sort of girl."

"Well, I won't hurry you. You must continue practising with me for the present. But you'd better give up medicine after you are married; you have no genius for it."

"I know that confoundedly well. I hate it," said the other.

Now Dr. Godfrey Messenger was far from intending to do wrong.

He knew that his handsome nephew was a favorite with the women.

If Miss Jem Murray chose to accept him—his good looks were genuine.

As for his disposition, the least said the better.

He had endured it from Eustace's boyhood.

Perhaps matrimony would improve it.

Now it chanced that Jem had friends among all kinds of people.

Within her circle was a modest little widow who sewed for her, and to whose little children Jem had been very kind, they looking upon her as a Lady Bountiful.

Hearing that Mrs. Lloyd was sick and unable to work, Jem called upon her for to see if she could be of any service.

She found the usual neat apartments much confused and disordered, a fire only in the kitchen, near which lay a child in a cradle, while Mrs. Lloyd's languid voice came from an adjoining room.

"Oh, dear Miss Murray, I don't know what we shall do!" moaned the poor little woman. "We were all packed for moving to more convenient rooms, last week, when I took cold and had such a pain I could not go on with the work and postponed it until this week.

"But all the carpets are taken up, and all the furniture packed. Such a place for the doctor to come to! But something is the matter with Johnny; he has a sore throat, and is in a burning fever.

"Willie has gone for the doctor, and poor Nellie—only nine years old, you know—has been trying to put the place to rights. But she can't cook anything. I haven't had a mouthful to eat to-day——"

Here the little woman broke down.

"Don't cry! I will see what I can do for you," said Jem, rapidly divesting herself of her wraps, and in one rapid glance taking in the sink piled with dirty dishes, the floor and chairs strewn with flour, and the sick child in the cradle.

She had on a beautiful new suit of pearl-colored cashmere, and hurriedly covering it with a pink wrapper of Mrs. Lloyd's, she tied a red bandanna handkerchief over her hair to protect it from dust, and commenced an onset on the coal fire, which was nearly out.

Jem was of course completely disguised by these changes.

She had cleared away the ashes and given Johnny a drink of water, when Nellie announced the doctor's buggy at the door.

It was Dr. Eustace, and Jem saw at once that he did not know her, the twilight helping to hide her features.

She could see his quite well however, and was astonished at the scowl of disgust which he threw around him on entering the room.

"Who sent for me?" he asked rudely.

"I did," faintly pronounced Mrs. Lloyd, who had risen, and, pale and languid entered the kitchen."

"My little boy——"

"What ails the child?" he demanded in the same cross tone, looking coldly at the patient little sufferer, not offering to do any more.

The poor mother, with burning cheek and choking throat, could not answer; but Jem, in a voice so changed by indignation as to be unrecognisable, replied from her corner of the room—

"It is your business to discover that."

Without deigning a reply, Dr. Eustace, in the same surly manner, asked a few brief questions of the mother concerning the little boy; then, making a brief examination, said—

"He has scarlet fever; but, from your appearance, I think you had better send for a city doctor. I don't care for this sort of practice and had rather not have been called."

And he seemed on the point of going off again, yet did not quite like the inhuman measure.

"The scarlet fever!" cried the mother aghast. "Oh my little Johnny! He must have every help. You must now prescribe for him, sir. I will pay you, of course," indignantly.

Without speaking, Dr. Eustace sat down at a table, and wrote a prescription.

His manner was still offensive, but he remarked that he would call again, and barely deigning a civil farewell, departed.

Poor Mrs. Lloyd was completely overwhelmed by her affliction.

She sank down by the cradle weeping, and did not notice the energy with which Jem put the room to rights, and cooked a nice comfortable supper for the suffering family.

If Jem suffered from disappointment, she made no other sign than this.

She fed the children, and nursed the sick child, comforted and encouraged the mother, and after doing all in her power, departed at nine o'clock in the evening, to send her own housemaid to Mrs. Lloyd's relief.

"You will prefer to take care of Johnny yourself, and he will need all your attention. Johanna will do everything else for you. And I will go see old Dr. Messenger, and have him attend the child. He—he is quite different," faltered Jem, going away secretly crying.

There was nothing dramatic in her nature; she hated scenes like—well, like a man, and yet she never hesitated.

She met Dr. Eustace at the hall door the next morning.

"No, we will not go up," she said coldly, as he made a motion to ascend the stairs. "My mother will prefer to be attended by your uncle in the future. I myself prefer not to trust her with you, though the sort of practice may be agreeable to you.

He changed color—looked at her.

What had she discovered?

"I was at Mrs. Lloyd's last evening. The fact makes a great difference in my estimate of you, Doctor Messenger. Do not come here any more as a physician or a friend."

It was a very hard blow and the man was staggered.

He looked once into her eyes to be sure the warmth had all gone out of them; then, taking his punishment in silence, bent his head and departed.

That his uncle found the whole matter out, Jem afterwards learned from the old man's pained apologies for his nephew; but she preferred to hear nothing more of it.

She saw that the sick child had every comfort during its convalescence; and, I am happy to say, soon utterly forgot young Dr. Eustace Messenger.

Twice Wooed.

BY BERTIE RAYLE.

"JESSIE, my dear, how you loiter! Here it is almost six o'clock, and Mr. Vane will be dreadfully impatient. Try and bring a little life into your face; you do not appear as a happy bride should."

"I am a most unhappy one," I replied drearily. "Oh, mamma, cannot this farce be stopped? I do not wish to be sold! What is poverty to such shame as this I feel?"

"You foolish, foolish girl! After all the trouble I have taken to bring about this fortunate match, you are mad to talk so. Here comes your bridegroom; mind you greet him properly."

Mamma had no time for further admonition, as the bridegroom and attendants entered.

"My dear, it is almost time to go down," said Royal Vane, bending his dark, penetrating eyes, upon my poor pale face, in a way I felt, if I did not meet their gaze.

Silently I took his offered arm and went slowly down the stairs into the brilliantly-lighted room, where the minister awaited us.

Oh, such utter silence as prevailed!

Only the grave tones of the minister's voice, as he repeated the beautiful, solemn ceremony could be heard.

At last he came to the question—"Will you take this man, etc."

I heard it all too plainly.

I saw my haughty mother's anxious face, pale at my silence, and the surprise growing on many, many faces, but I could not speak the lie.

I knew the dark eyes of my almost husband were upon me, regarding me in pained astonishment.

Oh, it was a pitiful, awful silence, broken at last by a resistless power that I could not thwart.

"No, no," I pleaded, raising my eyes to Royal Vane's white, sorrowful face.

"I do not love you. I cannot be your wife. Oh, how wicked, how weak I have been not to tell you sooner!"

Then, turning to mamma, I stretched out my arms.

"Forgive me—oh, forgive me, mamma!" I cried, and fell down at her feet in a dead faint.

They told me afterwards how mamma had explained that I had not been well and was no doubt delirious, that it would all be made right when I recovered; but I knew that one person would never consider my actions caused by the delirium of fever—Royal Vane had understood the truth instantly; I read it in his white, stricken face.

"Of all the disgraceful, dreadful scenes," wept mamma. "I little thought that you, Tessie, would cause me such shame and mortification."

I was really ill for several days, but one day, when almost recovered, they brought me a card.

I shuddered as I read the name—Royal Vane.

"Go down," said mamma angrily, "and let him see how a little fool has disgraced his bridal and wrecked his hopes."

I went down tremblingly, dreading his reproaches, but I need not have been in such trepidation; it was one of the calmest, kindest faces, albeit care-marked and older-looking, that met my gaze.

He came instantly forward, and in a quiet steady voice, asked—

"How is Tessie to-day?"

"Better," I faltered, "but so ashamed. Oh, Mr. Vane, try to forgive me! I wanted to tell you long ago, only mamma would not let me."

"Yes, I understand that, and it was better even at the last moment than a whole lifetime of regret."

And then so adroitly and skilfully he drew from my weak armor of subterfuge the story of mamma's embarrassments and need, and understood matters as they really were.

"Do you love any one else, Tessie?" he inquired before we parted.

"No," I said, "no one; only as I did not love you I could not be your wife. Here is your ring."

"The poor little empty ring!" he said sadly, tenderly slipping it on his watch-chain, "that once graced the hand of all the wife I shall ever know. Good-bye, Tessie, and Heaven bless you!"

And he was gone.

A week later mamma, jubilant and excited, came to me.

"My dear Tessie, you are a treasure, after all. In your usual silly way you let Royal Vane know of our stringent circumstances, and he has made us rich."

"Mamma!" I cried, feeling the hot blood of mortification rise to my temples.

"You surely will not accept it of him? Oh, the shame, the shame!"

And I broke down and sobbed bitterly.

"It is your own doings, and it is all arranged so that we cannot avoid profiting by his generosity. The mortgage is paid, and you may yet make a suitable match, when this little affair has blown over," said mamma, complacently adding—"By the way, Royal Vane has gone abroad; it was the wisest thing he could do. He will return in a few years with a bride, I dare say."

Long after she had left me I pondered in deep mortification of spirit on the circumstances so bitterly humiliating that surrounded us, and wondered, vaguely, how long Royal Vane would remain in Europe, and if mamma's surmise would prove true, and, by the very perversity of my woman's nature, I felt a slight twinge of jealousy in regard to this possible bride.

* * * * * *

Two years crept by, and mamma had not yet succeeded in bringing about the "suitable match" she had set her heart upon.

"Of all the ridiculous, old-fashioned girls I ever knew you are the stubbornest. What am I to do with you? Are you determined to be an old maid?"

"Yes, mamma."

"Royal Vane has returned, I hear; perhaps you fancy you can persuade him to attempt making you his bride again? I think he is far too wise, and——"

"Mamma, do not speak to me so," I earnestly pleaded.

"Royal Vane feels no worse contempt for me than I feel for myself."

At a party one night I saw him again, for the first time since his return—handsomer, graver, but the lion of the evening. Was it possible he had ever loved me? I could scarcely believe it, and crept back in an alcove that, myself unseen, I might behold him to my heart's content.

By and by I perceived our hostess bringing him direct to me, and trembled with mingled dread and pleasure; but when he addressed me in his calm, pleasant way, I grew more composed—that is, until some one in passing him inquired—

"Did your wife accompany you?"

My heart stood still.

I saw him smile and shake his head, but failed to catch his reply.

The room swam, the lights danced.

"The—the heat is great," I faltered.

"Let us go out upon the verandah. You do look ill. Come!"

I gladly went, drinking in strong, fresh draughts of the cool evening air.

"Did you say your wife——" I began, but could go no further.

"Tessie," he said gently, "do you see this?" and he held up my old engagement ring. "The only wife I ever had wore this a very little while."

And then it must have been the moonlight that betrayed my great relief, for he exclaimed—

"Tessie! Tessie! what is it I read in your dear eyes? Has it all been a mistake and do you love me? Will you wear this once more?"

I allowed him to put it on my finger;

then I flung my arms about his neck and sobbed for sheer joy.

"I loved you always, only I did not know it—not until you had gone away. For all the sorrow I have caused you, I will try to repay by a lifetime of devotion."

And when once more we stood before the minister, there were given two earnest, heartfelt responses.

May's Mission.

BY JULIUS THATCHER.

PRETTY May Winstone sat in her own little room in her mother's cottage, with pen, paper and ink spread before her, and though her eyes were intently gazing through the open window, she saw neither the bright flowers nor the fleecy clouds sailing in the blue sky on the distant horizon, nor heard the low buzz of the bee flitting from rose to rose, nor the loud song of the robin to his mate.

The sun glinted her hair with flecks of gold, the summer breeze caressed her, but for once the girl was deaf and blind to all save one great purpose, one absorbing thought.

A week before she had met Vernon Rushton.

Picnics were a favorite summer amusement in the quiet little country town where was May Winstone's home, and it was at one of these late had thrown her and Vernon Rushton together.

He was a stranger, spending a few weeks at the small hotel in the village, which occasionally attracted summer guests.

At first something in his light blue eyes had repelled rather than attracted her; but as they wandered together through one of the leafy paths, and he had told her how as soon as he had seen her he had wished and asked to be presented to her, and confided to her how few people in the world possessed for him this subtle chord of sympathy, she began to believe she had done him gross injustice, and was quite convinced she never before had met so charming a man.

Of course this sweeping assertion did not include Dick Travers, for she and Dick were engaged to be married.

Indeed, Dick talked of the autumn as the proper time for the wedding to take place, though as yet she had not given her consent to such speed.

She knew now that it was impossible, for in this one short week she and Mr. Rushton had held many long, confidential talks.

He had told her that he wrote, and was a poet—that every one in life should have a mission, and that he was quite sure she could make her name famous by her pen—that he saw the inspiration of poetry in her eyes.

If his words were true, she had wonderful difficulty in getting the said inspiration any further than her eyes, for it was at this task she was occupied on this lovely July day.

"May!" called her mother's voice. "Will you come down, dear, and help me shell the peas?

"It is washing-day, you know, and Mary has not time."

Shell the peas!

Oh, what a fall from the clouds.

And May, usually so bright and ready, slowly put away her writing materials, and, with a decided pout on the sweet, red lips, slowly descended the stairs.

Her task finished, a sudden shadow fell athwart the window, through which was thrust a handsome close-cropped head, and two laughing, brown eyes surveyed the interior, while a cheery voice broke the silence—

"I have come to take you for a drive, May.

"It is really too lovely a day for indoors.

"Come, get your hat, dear, and let us be off."

"Not to-day, Dick!" she answered indifferently.

"It was very kind of you to come, but I've something I particularly wish to do this afternoon."

"Not drive, May! Why, what is to be done?

"I will wait for you a little while if it is important."

"Don't wait.

"I can't go!"

"I've hardly seen anything of you for a week, May.

"Last night that Rushton fellow deliberately outstayed me.

"He'd have had harder work, but that he made me mad and jealous. How can you tolerate him, May?

"There isn't an inch of real manhood about him, yet you smiled on him, and encouraged him to stay until I could stand it no longer, and left him a free field."

"We saw your temper, Dick.

"You need not recur to it.

"Mr. Rushton said it was greatly to be regretted you were so rash and not-headed."

"Mr. Rushton!

"Confound him!

"What right has he to express an opinion of me to you?

"If you loved me, you wouldn't have listened to it."

For all reply, the girl exasperatingly shrugged her shoulders, and rose to put away the peas.

When she turned back, the face at the window had gone.

Fearful of giving her another illustration of his much-to-be-regretted disposition, he had sought refuge in flight; and she was once more free to seek the room which henceforth Vernon Rushton had told her would appear in his eyes, though they never had beheld it, as the enshrined bower of a poetess.

An hour passed, and only four lines was imprinted on the sheet; but of these metre and rhythm were quite perfect, and her heart beat high with exultation.

Then again her mother's voice recalled her to this mundane sphere—this time, however, to announce a visitor—Mr. Rushton was below.

Very, very pretty May looked, as, with flushed cheeks and bright eyes, she ran down to meet him.

His light blue orbs dilated at the picture.

"I have come to ask you to take a stroll with me," he said, in his weak, low voice.

"Such days as this inspire one, and I am sure in every bush and tree you will find lurking some new and beautiful thought."

Ah, if Dick had but asked her to go out to seek inspiration, she might have responded with as much alacrity as now!

So it happened that, returning from his lonely drive, a little repentant for his hastiness, and ready to blame his own jealous and impetuous temper for unjust suspicion, he saw directly in front of him two figures, slowly strolling along.

He was not long in recognizing them both, and a great, hot wave of indignant anger surged up to his face.

He was wonderfully tempted to leap out in front of them, and by a vigorous application of his whip, teach this miserable pretender a lesson he would not soon forget.

But he resisted the temptation and drove on, deigning them, as he passed, neither word nor glance; but May, catching a look of his face, felt a sudden fear.

She had never seen Dick, dear old Dick, wear that look before, and Mr. Rushton, for the rest of their walk, found her very silent, and it is to be feared that neither from tree, nor shrub, did May gather inspiration.

And though Mrs. Winstone's delicious teas were far more inviting than the repast spread at the hotel, he was not bidden to enter in and feast.

Yet May had condemned herself thereby to a long, lonely evening.

If Dick had come in, all might have been explained; but Dick, white and miserable, was bending over his desk, writing a letter; which, though savoring nothing of poetry, cost him as infinite labor as all her inspirations.

Many a sheet he began and never finished, before, at last, a few curt lines, which almost hid the pain their birth had given him, were left to stay and reach their destination.

Next morning May found them beside her breakfast plate.

These were all the words they contained—

"I have been blind, May; but I see now. I know now why you could not drive with me yesterday, and why you let me go away the night before. You'll forgive me that I didn't recognize the truth you have tried to tell me in everything but speech, and so the sooner have given you back your freedom. If you'll keep the few things I have sent you, I should be very glad, for they are hateful enough in my sight, and the weather is somewhat too warm to build a fire for funeral pyre.

"DICK."

This was all.

But for the last phrase, born of the great bitterness of a young heart, May might have relented, and sent back a few lines which would have brought her lover to her feet; but these hardened her.

Within an hour she had gathered together every token of his love; then slipping from her finger the pearl ring which had betokened their engagement, she put them with the rest, and despatched them to him without a word.

"Mr. Rushton says every woman has a mission," she told herself, lest she should fancy her heart ached.

"Nothing now need interfere with my work.

"I shall write a poem.

"I can make my own experience its foundation, and so send it into the world to teach other women man's perfidy."

When Mr. Rushton called that evening, she said—

"I have broken my engagement, Mr. Rushton!"

It was too dark for May to see the sudden flash of triumph in his light, steely eyes.

It was strange, she thought, as the days wore on, but Vernon Rushton's attraction for her had fled.

Somehow he wearied her.

She wished he would not come quite so often.

She did not care to offend him, for he was to give her the name of the editor to whom her precious poem, now rapidly approaching completion, was to be entrusted.

At last she had put to it the final correction, the last stop, signing her initials with infinite precision and care.

She had tasted some of the first fruits of future triumphs, when she had read it to him in its completed form, and he had listened with upturned eyes and bated breath.

"Your mission soon will be fulfilled," he said to her; "but, oh, May, what might we not accomplish together—two such poetic minds!

"I would not separate you from your mother, dear, if you would become my wife; but here, in this pretty cottage we could be happy together.

"May I hope, my love? Will your cast your lot with mine?"

But May had fled shuddering from his extended arms, and a few hours later there followed him to his hotel the hastily-scrawled note, which he read, cursing his fate, since the pretty nest he had so carefully striven for, he learned, all luxuriously feathered as it was, never might be his.

Penniless and love-lorn, he must again return to daily toil for daily bread, too much time having been squandered in a vain pursuit for food and shelter, with the necessary accompaniment of a wife.

There was now nothing left for May but to find consolation in her mission.

With trembling hands, but hopeful heart, she despatched her poem to its destination.

Days merged into weeks, and she heard nothing from it, until at last she sent a tiny note asking for some news of it.

The reply was brief.

Her sacred work had long since been consigned to the waste-paper basket, condemned as rubbish, and unreturned to her for want of return postage.

The blow was terrible.

She had not even kept a copy, and never could she gather up courage to make a second effort.

With the heartless letter in her hand, she flew to the woods, where secure from interruption, she might fling herself face downwards upon the sward and sob out some of her heart's grief.

So wrapped was she in her own misery, that she heard no step approaching, until some one called her name.

It was Dick, her lover, who stood beside her.

Ah, her lover now no longer!

"May!" he said.

"What is it, child?

"Will you not tell me?

"Poor little girl! What is troubling you?"

The tender tone was more than she could bear.

How it happened she did not know, but in a moment she found herself sobbing, not tears of wretchedness, but tears of joy; for Dick's arms were about her and her head was on Dick's heart.

She tried then to make him understand some of her humiliating confession; but he would not listen to it—only, a few days later he came to her, with a roguish smile on his face, and held up before her a little slip of paper.

It was an advertisement, in doggerel verse, for some patent tooth-powder.

"This is one of Mr. Rushton's poems," he told her.

"Evidently not a very lucrative occupation, since he has left the hotel a month in arrears for his board."

But seeing the quick tears of mortification start to May's eyes, he bent and kissed them away.

But in long after years the girl learned that only her false mission in life had failed her, and her true mission—the mission of a loving wife and tender mother—had met its richest and its fullest completion.

FAMOUS DISHES.—The etymology of many famous dishes is very doubtful; but M. Jules Claretie has, in his latest contribution to the *Temps*, cleared up one or two obscure points; such, for instance, as the origin of the term "bouchees a la Reine." This dish was, he says, invented by Marie Leczinska, the wife of Louis XV., who was very fond of good living; while the King's mistress stood godmother not only to the "tendrons d'agneau a la Pompadour"—that goes without saying—but to the "filets de volaille a la Bellevue," named after the palace in which she used to entertain her royal lover at supper. Marie Leczinska's father—King Stanislas of Poland—invented the "baba," a very poor substitute for the English "tipsy cake;" while the mahonnaise sauce was invented by the Duc de Richelieu after his victory at Mahon, and has since been corrupted into "mayonnaise."

IN a Russian town the club is reported as in a great state of excitement over a set of new rules, among which are the following: "No one shall enter with dirty boots or clothing smelling of pitch, leather or fish. No velvet waistcoats or green cravats shall be allowable. It is expressly forbidden that during a dance members shall use the window curtains as pocket handkerchiefs."

Revitalizing a Worn Out System.

An elderly lady in East Orleans, Mass., after a year's use of Compound Oxygen, reports that, through its vitalizing effects, she has been able to keep about in her little store, and earn enough for her daily needs. "I commenced," she said, "using your Compound Oxygen a year ago last April; have had in all, three supplies. For more than a year I have not failed to be in my little store, and, averaging sales, earn enough for the day's needs. This I esteem a very great blessing, and as I believe the ability to do this was due to the use of the Compound Oxygen, I have wished others on the down-hill side of life, and obliged (because unable to work), to depend on others for support, could know, as I do, its power to revive waning abilities of both mind and body."

Our Treatise on Compound Oxygen, its nature, action, and results, with reports of cases and full information, sent free. DRS. STARKEY & PALEN, 1109 & 1111 Girard St., Philadelphia, Pa.

REJECTED ADDRESSES.

QUEEN ELIZABETH, when the delicate matter was broached to her of marriage with the Duke of Anjou, was not unwilling to entertain the idea; indeed, her Majesty of England was seldom unwilling to think of any man; she would think, and that was all; though never developed into action or led to any practical result.

The Queen liked what she called a "proper man"—one handsome in face, graceful in carriage, tall in stature, sound in limb, and who excelled in all manly exercises.

Among all the aspirants whom she had at one time or another encouraged, there was not a man—and from Courtenay to Essex the list is a crowded one—who was not pleasing to look upon.

Now, the Duke of Anjou was essentially a "proper man."

"He is taller than I am by an inch," writes Walsingham to Leicester, who had been somewhat curious as to the appearance of his successor, "rather pale, well made, and with long limbs.

"If all that one sees is as good as what one does not see, he is healthy enough.

"At first sight he seems haughty, but on acquaintance he is courteous, and far more easy of access than either of his brothers.

"He has numerous friends, partly for his own sake and partly to humor his mother, with whom he is the favorite son."

Tall, with well-cut features, and the dark languishing eyes which made the women of the Valois race so bewitching, the young Duke was the most favored of all the favored gallants in the loosest court of Europe.

He had begun life as a soldier, and had brilliantly distinguished himself in two battles; but he soon permitted himself—after his sword had been sheathed in his scabbard—to be corrupted by the idle and voluptuous life which then made Paris the most courted city on the Continent.

His early manhood was passed in one succession of what are called "conquests"—though when the citadel is ever ready to surrender, conquest is perhaps too strong a word to employ.

He was a great dandy, and spent enormous sums upon his wardrobe; he was given to much jewelry, and his hands, of which he was justly proud, were covered with brilliants.

His disposition was generous, and the presents he bestowed upon the frail beauties who attended upon Catherine de Medicis were said to be lavish in the extreme.

"If the Queen, your mistress," said a great French seigneur to Walsingham, who had gone over to Paris to sound the queen-mother, "is not content with Monseigneur, she should never marry, but at once take the oath of perpetual virginity."

Queen Elizabeth was, however, perfectly willing to be contented—at least for a time.

She carefully studied the portrait of the young Duke, considered him handsomer than the Duke de Nemours, and hoped that he would take boat and pay her a visit at Greenwich.

Lord Buckhurst was despatched upon a special mission to Catherine to support Walsingham and to give expression to the views of Elizabeth upon the matter.

Her Majesty, he said, was desirious of entering into an alliance with France; she was honored with the attentions of the Duke of Anjou, and it was her wish seriously to consider them.

The queen-mother, who was perfectly aware of the weakness of the daughter of Anne Boleyn for tempting a man on by false promises to a certain point, and then quietly deserting him for a newer and therefore more fascinating rival, was resolved, now that her favorite son was concerned, to tolerate no feminine trickery in the matter.

She replied that if she was sure that Elizabeth really intended marriage, and would not behave to the Duke of Anjou as she had behaved to the others who had pretended to her hand, both she and the King of France were in favor of the match; but she must be assured that there would be no evasion in the negotiations, no giving of promises and then backing out of them, as had been the case with the brother of Monsieur.

Buckhurst thereupon declared that he had been especially charged to say that the Queen of England had resolved upon marriage, that she would not marry one of her subjects, and that she was desirous of uniting herself with one of the royal houses of the Continent.

The Duke of Anjou, he urged, pleased her, and the alliance was in every way a suitable one.

Catherine, thus reassured, was of the same opinion; she entered into details with Buckhurst, and drew up a series of articles upon which the proposed marriage was to be based, which she requested the envoy on his return to England to place in the hands of Elizabeth.

The interview then ended.

To poison a well is one of the worst of crimes. It is worse to poison the fountain of life for one's self and for posterity. Often by carelessness, or misfortune, or inheritance this has been done. Ayer's Sarsaparilla goes back of the symptoms, picks up these impure seeds from the blood, the vital stream, and restores appetite, strength and health.

Our Young Folks.

GIPSY BEN.

BY ARION.

IN the mill-house slept Oliver and Maggie Greenfield, with their kind-hearted, but gruff, unapproachable—some said money-loving, money-getting—Uncle Joe, and Aunt Mary his sister, the orphan children's guardians and the owners of the mill.

Maggie was twelve, Oliver eleven; both brown-eyed, sunny-haired, happy, radiant-faced children.

But what meant that dark stalking figure of a man advancing up by the river-side, past the weir, so turbulent and restless, past the old mill-wheel, to where the moon-beams fell calm and clear in front of the house?

Here he halted, raised his face—a dark, scowling, evil-looking countenance, of gipsy cast.

There was no misunderstanding his dark visage, and that his uplifted fist meant harm to Joseph Greenfield or his; that was certain.

This done, he turned away.

The next morning, after Maggie had laid everything for breakfast, she flitted out to the porch to enjoy the beauty of the morning, and to have a word with Oliver, if so be he were at leisure.

"Oliver," she said, putting her head in at the mill door.

"The Hughes tribe of gipsies is come to the woods again, so Mary Parker said when she came for her milk this morning," was Maggie's announcement to her brother.

"Whew!

"They haven't been here these twenty years, and then 'twas war to the knife with Uncle Joe, as I've heard," returned Oliver, his face lighting up with excitement.

"What happened?"

"Nothing; only uncle vowed he'd have none of their thieving ways, and he did not."

"How was it that he didn't?" inquired Maggie.

"Why, they were afraid to try it on.

"It all ended in spatter and foam, very much like what is going on out there by the water-wheel."

"But what was their grievance?" asked Maggie.

"Oh, something amiss between their grandfather and our grandfather."

"And who was in the right?

"Why, what ones you girls are to ferret out things!

"Well, it seems that our grandfather was the principal, if not the only, witness against theirs for fishing in the weir—fishing by moonlight or something.

"However, it sent him to prison, and made all the Hugheses our enemies for life.

"But see, there is aunt calling us in to breakfast."

And in they went to their morning meal, that dark, shadowy figure, with arm uplifted as in malediction, remaining a mystery of the night.

* * * * * *

Away in the darkness of the woods, climbing the distant hills, stood the gipsy camp, a motley scene of life.

Dark, weary-faced, elderly women, scowling men, wild, merry, prankish boys and girls, the most rollicking, mischievous young urchin of all, perhaps, Ben Hughes, the son of the elder Ben, a tattered, shoeless lad of about Oliver Greenfield's age, without a mother to give him aught of attention and love, and his father anything but a model parent.

Ben Hughes was faulty, very faulty, and without one redeeming virtue, save, perhaps, that of an ardent affection for an ugly brute of a dog, his very own, a waggish sort of creature, which snapped right and left at any who molested him, but which clung to his master like a part of his very self.

It was touching to see the affection between these two—Master Tag and Ben, his master.

Well, one lovely evening, as he sat by a rivulet flowing through a sunny glade in the woods, Tag by his side, who should come upon the scene but Oliver Greenfield, with his uncle's cross-grained old mill-dog, Ruff.

The dogs, as soon as they scented each other, showed their teeth, and snarled at one another.

Little Tag was no match for Ruff, but before their masters had well thought of it they had closed in a fight, a fierce battle, yelping, howling, and biting at each other's throats.

"Call your dog off, you coward!" cried the gipsy boy, kicking Ruff, and so increasing his fury.

"How can I?" came from Oliver's white lips.

It made him faint to see Tag struggling and wrestling in such unequal strife, and his dog punishing him so.

He would [illegible] but see he could use it then had scattered his mite of a dog away; he was in time to beat back Ruff as he sprang towards the gipsy lad, if so be he might tear his adversary from his shattering arms.

The affray had been but a few minutes' duration, but Tag lay quivering, bleeding, panting in his master's arms, done to death—even Ruff had done him to death.

Oliver [illegible] him with a great [illegible] in doubts it was not fault of his own that [illegible] ought.

"Oh, Tag, my darling, I would have died for ya, I would!" said the poor lad, a storm of hot tears plashing down on the mite.

"I suppose you think me a chicken-hearted girl, a-crying and whining here like this?" said he fiercely to Oliver.

"No, I don't; and I'll buy you another dog, a real beauty, to make up for what has happened," returned the other soberly.

"I don't want your real beauties; keep 'em for yourselves, all the pack of you Greenfields—I know you.

"Poor Tag were beauty enough for me, and you wouldn't let me keep 'un. I hate you!"

Ben's heart was rent with grief, rage, and the sense of desolation sweeping over him.

"Go! go!" he cried, laying Tag a lifeless body on the ground, and springing at Oliver.

"Go!

"You shall rue the day all this came about.

Ha! ha! his grief was over-mastering him.

Oliver thought it best to quit the spot, so leading Ruff by the collar, he turned away, and then returned to his small, dear friend.

* * * * * *

The Hugheses made a long stay this year.

Ben Hughes very often passed by the mill.

He always looked scowling and gloomy, and Maggie took to watching for him, to note if his face brightened, as a sign that his wounded heart was healing.

One evening, when she was playing with her white kitten, and Ben went by, she hid the wee thing in her apron from him, scarce knowing why she did it.

Then she fancied she read a sort of hunger in his eyes, and took the white ball of a thing in her arms, and went to meet him, saying—

"Would you like her for your own, instead of your dog?" holding her out to him, her cheeks flushing with confusion.

"Instead of T—

"No, nothing 'll ever be instead of him," was the sorrowful reply, a misty light gathering in his eyes.

"No, missie, you keep on your way, and I'll keep on mine; 'tisn't likely we'll ever come together; leastways, not all along of a kitten."

But his hand wandered gently over the small thing's soft white coat ere he turned sullenly away.

This was in September, and late in October Ruff was lost; poor old Ruff, who seemed part and parcel of the old mill itself.

He must have been stolen in the night, or murdered, as Maggie expressed it.

Had the poor dog met with his death, and was it that he had been cast in the deep mill-river?

Once Ben, passing by when Maggie was out on the platform, asked if the dog was found, with something like concern on his face.

"No," said Maggie.

"My uncle Joe thinks he has been killed."

"Ha! ha! then we've got him in our clutches," the lad laughed, yet tears were welling in his eyes.

"You shouldn't laugh; 'tisn't kind," said Maggie.

"No, but what seems laughing ain't always laughing," quoth the boy.

"But will you tell that brother of yours that all along of you and that kitten, as is yours and mine, I'll not show spite to him, and if I hear of his dog I will let him be."

Saying, he turned away.

* * * * * *

The mill was a gloomy place in winter-time.

No house stood near, save the "Frog's Hole," a disreputable public-house a half-mile away, nestling in a damp, dismal hollow—hence its name.

It was very quiet and lonely within doors on Christmas Eve, as Maggie wreathed and put up the holly, only Oliver coming and going, and keeping her company there.

Their aunt and uncle were gone in the spring cart to Harristow Market, a good eight miles away, her aunt to make some needful preparations, as she often did when her brother could drive her.

Then, too, a relative lay sick in the town, nigh to death.

They might be late, even till midnight, they told the children as they departed; for they must o'en tarry a while in Christian charity to see how it would go with their sick kinswoman.

The afternoon closed in,

Now came a tap at the outer door.

An urchin from the Frog's Hole stood on the door-step when Oliver answered the knock, and gave him a dirty-looking note, which [illegible] (Oliver's) name scrawled upon it.

"HONORABLE SIR,—

"I know all about it; if you'll come to the Frog's Hole at five o'clock, Master Oliver, you'll hear something to your advantage.

"LITTLE BEN HUGHES."

This was what was written thereon, in a strange medley of capitals and small letters.

"'Tis from Ben, and he knows all about Ruff."

"Ought I to go and see him, Maggie?" said the bewildered boy, putting the dirty paper into her hand.

"I don't know.

"Uncle never likes our going near that place.

"Yet—"

She hesitated; it seemed as if they ought not to let the opportunity slip.

"I'll go," said Oliver.

"Yes, I think you ought," replied Maggie.

So Oliver went out on his mysterious errand, and his sister stayed alone in the house.

The weir sounded so sad to night; she wished her uncle and aunt would come home.

She went to the door and hearkened for the sound of wheels—no, all was silence, and darkness, save for the sobbing, moaning water.

Now the music of the Christmas bells came to her from the village, on a jingle of three bells—still they told of the world's great gladness.

And, oh! what was that?

A scream, Oliver's scream, and his voice pleading.

"No, not to the weir!

"Oh, Maggie they are drowning me!"

Where was he?

The voice sounded near.

"No, not to the weir, father."

That was Ben Hughes's tongue speaking, terror making it shrill.

She darted out—yet what could she do?

She fancied the weir clamored, as if refusing to receive the poor, beguiled, entrapped boy.

Oh! where was he?

It was pitch dark; she could see nothing, hear nothing now, save the weir.

She bent over it; it was terribly dark and gloomy, as death is gloomy.

Now a rough hand was on her shoulder.

"What art doing here?" asked the coarse voice of the owner of the hand.

"Looking for—for my brother," faltered the terror-stricken child.

"And he ain't here yet, but he shall be if you don't come and show me where your uncle keeps his money-box—and quick, too!"

"Oh! I may not, I may not!" she cried; yet the thought came to her, what was money compared with Oliver's life?

The sweet jingling bells told their gladness, and the poor sister lifted up her heart to Him who was once a child, and knows a brother's love—for are we not all His brethren?—knows how hard it is to give a loved one up.

Surely this mute uplifting of her heart to Him, so especially near to His people in their need, on Christmas Eve near to children, by the remembrance of His own childhood, saved her and her brother also.

There was a struggle, a resistance going on hard by in the darkness, a sudden splash, a scream, while the weir clamored on as in sudden wrath; then the rumble of wheels nearer and nearer.

Then followed the scudding away of feet, upon the voice of Uncle Joe, and her own dear brother stood by her side.

"Run, Maggie, for a lantern; I'm going for a rope; Ben's in the weir.

"He's saved my life!" said he in his terror.

Well, Oliver managed to throw down a rope to the gipsy lad, clinging to the water-wheel.

A weird group they looked in the yellow light of the lantern Maggie held, her face the whitest of them all.

Safe in the mill-house, and Ben in bed, the lads told their story.

The elder Ben and other fellows had planned to rob the mill in the absence of miller, and judging Oliver best away for his purpose, lads young Ben write the note, which he did in all good faith, never doubting but that they had Ruff in hiding, and were about to deliver him up.

Discovering the scheme after Oliver was at the Frog's Hole, the two boys crept out, with no definite plan as to the part they were to play.

Falling in with the ruffians, they threatened to drown young Greenfield if he did not keep quiet, and let them work their will with his uncle's property.

What further they would have made good their threat cannot be said, but in the scuffle, Ben, siding with Oliver, was hustled into the weir.

"And I would have died for ya.

"I couldn't have seen ye drowned, with them bells a-ringing," said the outcast, gathered, at least for one night, into the warmth of home.

"And you, little missie, began it all, by being kind and piteous-like to me, as no one loves."

Now he held out his hand to Maggie, and the child took it, bending down and kissing it.

"I shall so love you now," she said, "because you have been in danger of dying for my brother."

"Ah, by the crowning love of Christmas-time, let this grievance be laid aside between the Hugheses and the Greenfields.

"Will you tell your uncle this?" spoke the miller, as if moved by the sweet influence stealing on with the dawn of day.

"Ay, sir, I will," said the weary, but [illegible]

Santa Claus came down to them all anew that [illegible], holy, child-like presence of love renewed and [illegible]. And on the morrow, when Ben went out to join his swarthy friends, who had hastily struck their camp and flitted, he took a portion of the same blessed spirit with him, for a few months later there came to Mr. Greenfield a note from the elder Ben, as follows:—

"MR. GREENFIELD.—I killed your dog, and you'll find his bones in the weir, but I will never harm aught of yours again, because our children have been wiser than we, and made friends the one with the other, and because of something about Christmas that I and little Ben are learning.

Yes it is quite certain the sweet influence was about them still—Christ-like love and forgiveness.

MAKING OIL-PAINTINGS.

OIL paintings, 24 by 36 inches, finely mounted and stretched, are sold in New York at a profit for fifty dollars a hundred.

Eight artists have been known to produce 125 of these paintings in a day. Large handsome flat Dutch gilt frames for the paintings sell for $1. These are wholesale rates. The pictures retail from $2 apiece up, and one of them has been sold as high as $250. They are sold chiefly by peddlers, who carry stocks of them through all the mining towns of the West.

Many shows an amount of labor and skill in execution which it would seem impossible to command for ten times the price that is asked. They are all landscapes, as nothing else sells so well.

The paintings come in many sizes, but the price does not vary much.

They generally represent a river, mountains in the distance, a bit of country with fences and trees and here and there a farm-house.

The tints are well blended, and at a distance produce a pleasing effect.

This is especially true of the picture intended for the Eastern trade.

Thirteen years ago, when [illegible] was begun, loud, flaring [illegible] and bold effects were in demand, but now such paintings are only wasted in the West.

There they want the gayest of colors, and, above all, they must have a castle. Castles of the most remarkable design are thrown in anywhere.

They are erected on the side of a steep mountain or an island in the wild woods. They must have plenty of turrets and battlements.

One of the largest of these oil-painting manufactories is in [illegible] street, where there are rooms filled with racks containing hundreds of finished paintings.

On an upper floor a reporter saw eight persons, six of whom were young women. They were hard at work and painting very rapidly.

The proprietor, is an artist who studied four years under Gerome, in Paris. Finding very little money in high art, he invented [illegible] for the rapid production of cheap paintings.

The paintings are made on heavy muslin which is first wet and stretched tightly on long frames.

It is then cut into the required size, and stretched by a machine on a square pine frame, where it is made fast.

Next the muslin is tinted a light blue and after this has dried it is ready for the painter. A coating of oil is first put on it, and then a stencil plate is laid on the muslin. This stencil is of thick paper, with all sorts of odd shapes cut in it.

A boy stands on one side of the table and a girl on the other, and near them are several small pots of paint. They daub the paint into the holes in the stencil plate with great rapidity.

When the stencil is removed the [illegible] seen to be spotted here and there with paint. Another stencil is then used, which [illegible] the work, and at last the muslin is completely covered with a patch-work of varied colors.

It is then handed to a young woman, who blends the background. She uses several brushes in running the colors into each other, and finally goes over all with a large camel's hair brush.

The result is surprising. The patch-work [illegible] a harmonious combination of blended tints.

The muslin then goes to a man who blends the foreground in the same manner. Next it is dried and passes to the [illegible] who works from a model hung on [illegible] easel.

She outlines the trees, fences, [illegible] other accidents of scenery [illegible]

Mr. Levin [illegible] very [illegible] to comply with orders [illegible] other houses.

He has 100 different styles of [illegible] but some sell much better than others.

He has tried figure-pieces, but they did not take well.

The paint stands the test of time very well, and is softened and improved by age.

When handsomely framed these paintings, Mr. Levin says, are sometimes hung in private galleries among expensive paintings.

BRIGHT'S DISEASE of the Kidneys, Diabetes and other Diseases of the Kidneys and Liver, which you are being so frightened about. Hop Bitters is the only thing to cure them and prevent early graves. Another great discovery is every day received for a time like this, makes you feel [illegible] worse.

Ladies' Department.

FASHION CHAT.

THE tailoring-made costumes are still in great demand, styles are becoming more and more prominent in ladies' toilettes.

Many pardessus are worn with straight fronts, fastened by an under tab, and finished off with a collar with revers, precisely like that on a gentleman's coat, and with sleeves cut exactly like coat sleeves.

It is really difficult to tell, when the vetement is seen from the front, whether it is intended for a man or woman.

February is always one of the worst months for fashions, indeed, everything is at a standstill until the new spring styles have made their appearance.

Meanwhile shop-keepers make a brisker business with sales, representing in their most tempting guise the goods they have been unable to dispose of during the winter.

No reduction in prices is one of their prominent inducements to purchasers.

Tailor-made cloth and serge dresses are still the best choice for walking-costumes.

They are by no means the most inexpensive, however, as an exquisite fit is essential from the very fact of their extreme simplicity.

Every careless stitch or mis-shapen seam offends the eye at once, for there is no hiding defects under untidy or irregular trimmings.

Hence the make of these garments can scarcely be attempted at home, or even entrusted to a dressmaker; a first-rate tailor should have the order, and he, aware of his own reputation, knows how to charge well for his work.

Yet, in the end, the expense is a saving, for the costume looks neat and stylish to the last.

A pretty dress of this kind is made of dark-blue cloth.

The bodice, with horse-shoe sides, extends in short square basques; on either side of the fronts mount five small palms braided in black.

The straight skirt is set in box-pleats about three inches wide, at the edge of which are braided two of the palms, one over the other.

All walking costumes are still worn short, but toilettes for indoor wear, for dinners and concerts, are to be trained.

These trains will frequently be made of material differing from the dress, and are very handsome in brocart, brocaded with a magnificent design of foliage, over a skirt of satin.

Panniers of brocart edge the corsage, and are much puffed on the hips.

The new trains are particularly elegant, full and supple, with folds natural to the material, which is no longer fastened, taped, and forced to fall in some special stiff manner to which it is in no way adapted.

A favorite style will be a lace skirt, short enough to allow the foot to be seen, and as convenient as a short costume, but far more graceful owing to the long train of satin or velvet, stretching out almost like a court train.

This is one of the most successful modes of the season for evening wear.

Couturieres, as well as modistes, are making great use of ribbon, with the edges cut out in cocks' combs.

A lovely toilette of the palest mauve satin merveilleux has the skirt bordered with a thick, ruche of loops and ends of ribbon, cut in this way in every shade of violet, from the darkest pansy or wood violet to the lightest tints of Parma violets.

Nothing could be prettier than these close ends of ribbon, all cut in sharp irregular points, and with strange effects of light and shade.

At the same house, that of a couturiere whose taste is well known, was a walking costume of corn flower blue cloth and ottoman.

The skirt was of ottoman, set in large fluted pleats; the tunic was of cloth, and formed of two draperies crossed in front and a puff at the back.

The Louis XV. corsage was made with sharp points front and back, a straight collar, and close fitting sleeves.

A braided design, simulating carnations, ornamented the draperies and the corsage.

It is braid work is both new and pretty, for the leaves and stalks the braid is sewn on flat, but in the flowers it is put on edgeways, thus giving them a different effect and making the flowers appear in relief in comparison with the rest of the work.

Redingotes are still in full favor, and are much worn by young married ladies for visiting or walking toilette.

They are open in front and show the skirt, which is therefore often highly ornamented, applications of velvet or plush on a cloth, satin, or faille ground being very unusual.

A rich costume is of fine green satin and plush, the satin skirt edged with a deep plush pleating and a satin balayeuse, the front of the skirt covered with applications of plush secured by buttonhole stitch in green silk.

The plush redingote has added basques lined with quilted green satin, and is fastened to the waist with cords and tassels buttoning across the front, or else the upper part of the front is open also and filled in with an embroidered plastron like the skirt, or a plush waistcoat, fastening with small round metal or passementerie buttons.

The chapeau is of green plush with satin strings and a plume of shaded shrimp pink feathers.

Striking, but very dressy, is a brocaded redingote, entirely in black, relieved only by quaint gimp ornaments, composed of wheels and olives in gold and multi-colored silk.

Two shine on either side, apparently catching back a slight, draping fold.

A good way of transforming a broche casquin into a polonaise costume is to border it with an immense band of astrachan, if black, or any kind of fur, braid trimming, &c.

This ornament has the double purpose of decoration and concealment, of the join with which the cashmere or cloth is added to the sides, to hang perfectly straight, and look as though all in one with the cuirass.

The sides are slashed nearly to the hips with a border in keeping.

The massive cabbage bows seem to be forsaken for a lighter kind of bow, still circular, but composed of narrow loops of ribbon about one inch in width, lightly grouped together and with their ends cut swallow-tail fashion.

On bonnets they replace the Spanish pompons so long in vogue.

Again, the olive, with its foliage, forms a thick bunch, rather uncommon, for the ornament of a white bonnet, further trimmed with green velvet ribbon.

For visiting and ceremonious toilets the fashionable head-dress is the cap-shape capote, the brim projecting over the top of the head, not the forehead.

Upon a frame of this style the velvet is applied shirred; the shirring is done on reeds, and runs in concentric rows from the base of the crown to within an inch or two of the edge of the brim.

The velvet on the brim is arranged over a little wadding to give it a puffed effect.

The trimming is exceedingly simple; a tuft of ostrich-tips a cluster of pompons, a cluster of flowers of the head of a bird is poised high on the left side.

A handsome model in a shirred capote is of navy-blue velvet trimmed with a small monture of fancy feathers, strings of the velvet cut bias, hemmed on the edges and fastened in a large bow set at the right side under the ear.

A second model in black velvet has a puff on the brim, is trimmed with a cluster of half-open red moss-rosebuds, with strings of three-inch wide, double-faced satin ribbon.

These capotes are repeated in all the popular colors, garnished with all the popular trimmings.

There is no arbitrary dictum in the shapes of hats.

The selection is made in accordance with the suitableness of the shape to the features of the wearer.

"The Vandyke" is perhaps the favorite.

It has a slightly conical crown, and a broad brim tilted up on the left side.

Often the crown is covered with velvet and the brim with plush, a row of furry chenille galloon edging the brim.

A stylish model in mulberry-color is trimmed with long, double plumes of mulberry and crushed strawberry, the plumes dividing from the front of the crown under an oval plaque of knife-plaited Oriental lace, which is confined by a long buckle of cut-steel and gold.

A most elegant "Vandyke" of black velvet and plush is trimmed with two long double black plumes, divided by a softly-stuffed bird.

An otter-brown velvet has two long, heavy plumes of the same color, separated by a bow of plush and two small steel buckles. A very stylish model of myrtle-green velvet is trimmed with two long plumes and three small tips of moss-green, secured by a long gold buckle.

Misses and little children wear large hats and large bonnets generously trimmed with heavy plumes.

The bag, the satchel, or the baskets are inevitable accompaniments of a woman's walk this winter.

The flat sachets of alligator skin, black or tan-colored, are carried to teas and receptions and to evening performances.

They hold the card-case, the pocket-book and handkerchief, with the small opera-glass, with a packet of sweets or lozenges for the people who get throat rheumatism in a crowd.

By this and probably by some other designations is meant the peculiar hacking cough which, as the result of heat, dryness or over-breathed atmosphere in a crowded place, attacks some people suddenly in the midst of a lecture, sermon, or some delicate passage of a song or symphony.

It is extremely annoying, and is quickest stopped by a mouthful of sweets.

To go back to the bag-fashion, which is most useful on such evening occasions for carrying a quantity of convenient trifles, including a vinaigrette.

Young girls quite rival the young lawyers now-a-days in bag-carrying in the street.

It may be shopping parcels or drawing materials, darning stockings or other embroidery, but huge bags of cashmere, monnie cloth, satin or embroidered serge, shaped like the long old fashioned ring purses, are now frequently seen, with rings of ivory or steel much larger round than a napkin ring, and bought either at the harness stores, or as thin silver bangles at the jewelers.

The bags may have skates in them or manuscript, books or lunch, nobody is any the wiser.

Square netted bags of fisherman's twine are lined with substantial satine, but the double or purse bag is convenient to handle, as it can be thrown over the arm and so leaves the hands free.

Some of this fashion comes from the absence of pockets, and wise are the women who have a car-ticket-pocket in their jacket cuffs, and a convenient small outer pocket for small change, to avoid the constant exhibition of the porte-monnaie.

As neither fashion nor natural inclination provides a woman with the numerous pockets a man has in "handy" reach, she must continue to carry bags and pretty baskets for stowage of small articles.

Thus she seldom or never enjoys an untrammelled walk, just as many women never walk unless they have errands to do or calls to make.

She seldom knows the glow of a good quick pace, where the arms are free to move, and assist the chest-muscles in taking deep inspirations of air.

Fireside Chat.

FANCY CARDS—WHAT TO DO WITH THEM.

THE fashion of sending cards at Christmas and other anniversaries seems to be in no wise dying out, and year by year the question arises, "What shall we do with our cards?"

Of course many people send away the next year the cards received the Christmas before; but this is not altogether advisable, as there is a fashion even in these things, and one of last year's cards can't usually be recognized, besides the risk one runs of forgetting, and sending them back to the original senders.

The first impulse is, of course, to stick them in a scrap-book, but one handsome book, into which can be pasted all such cards as are really worth keeping, is, as a rule, quite sufficient.

A family of children makes an exception; they are always pleased with cards of this sort, either fastened into scrap-books or left loose.

A very good way of preserving them for children's use is to make a sort of folding strip of them on the same plan as that on which views of places are often arranged.

Choose such cards as are of the same size or nearly so, lay them on a table side by side, face downwards, with about half an inch between each card; if the cards are thick, more space than this must be left.

Cut some strips of linen or muslin about an inch wide, and of the same length as the cards, and stick one of the strips, with strong gum or glue between each pair of cards, so as to make one long narrow sheet.

Put a heavy weight on them, and leave till they are dry.

Then take some more cards, and stick one on the back of each of those already arranged, leaving one at the end single.

When these in their turn are dry, procure a fancy box that will hold them all when they are folded up by means of the hinges of muslin, and stick the single card at the end of the strip, face upwards, at the bottom of the box; all the others must fold in on the top of it.

If possible, the designs on one side of the card should all look the same way, so to speak, thus avoiding too much turning of sheet about when it is in use.

If boxes are not procurable, they must all be covered up in an ornamental cover, like book, instead.

These cards are also very useful for ornamenting the outsides of blotting cases or for boxes to be used on Christmas trees, and even the inside of an ordinary cardboard box may be improved and used to contain little gifts after it had been thus decorated.

Many ladies lately have been using up their cards to ornament the panels of cupboards and other doors and for the tops of gipsy tables; but, however, well this may look it is questionable taste, and at the best of times has a tawdry appearance.

Large screens or draught excluders are often pasted over with large chromo-lithographs and the smaller cards are very useful for filling in the corners.

The miniature screens made of morocco leather for standing on a drawing-room table and holding carte de visites are well adapted for the display of cards, and anyone with neat fingers can contrive a very pretty little stand in the form of an easel for holding them.

The Christmas card chosen must be first mounted on strong card or Bristol board, and then strips of the board mounted at the upper and lower edges of it to resemble the tops and legs of an easel.

A strip of the board must also be attached at the back, so that the easel will stand upright on a table.

The frame should be stained or colored and afterwards shellacked, so as to resemble wood as much as possible.

I have lately seen a very uncommon ornament for a bracket made of Christmas cards.

It consisted of a ginger jar covered almost entirely with colored scraps and Christmas cards cut out so that they fitted easily on the curved surface of the jar.

They were fastened on with thick gum and afterwards varnished.

The effect was not unpleasing and seen from a distance, nobody would guess that the jar was not some rare specimen of china.

The larger cards with appropriate subjects are much appreciated by servants and poor people to hang up in their rooms.

They should be mounted on white cardboard, leaving a margin one or two inches wide according to the size of the card, and this margin should be covered with gilt paper.

Little gilt studs can be bought to fasten on the corners.

Whatever the frame may be, a loop of ribbon or a little ring must be added to hang it up by.

Sometimes cards mounted in this way are useful in nurseries or in children's and cottage hospitals.

If a pair of really good and pretty cards (and for this hand-painted cards are most suitable) be chosen, they may be mounted very effectively as handscreens.

A piece of cardboard the size required, must be first covered with sarsenet to form the back of the screen, and a good piece of it turned over to the other side.

Then the Christmas card must be carefully gummed on to this foundation on the side where the sarsenet has been turned over and then fastened into the bamboo or other frame.

The screen must be finished off with ribbon or cord at the corners, and a large bow of ribbon on the handle.

Splash screens for the back of washstands look very well for nurseries and children's rooms, covered with Christmas cards.

The cards should be fastened first to a piece of holland, and arranged as little formally as possible.

One of the best way of placing them is almost as the cards is thrown into a card basket, or like some of the patterns on the satteens that have been so fashionable as dresses this year.

The easiest way of arranging them thus is to lay the holland foundation on a table and just throw the cards down in the centre in a rough, unstudied way, arranging them a little afterwards so that each may be seen to greatest advantage, and not be too much covered by the one over it.

Weak glue is best for fastening them to the linen, and a light coat of thin varnish may be added or not, according to fancy, but this is usually unnecessary.

For flower-pot covers, cards with a floral design are very suitable.

Take four cards, all of exactly the same shape, and mount them on cardboard, leaving a margin of half an inch or more, according to the size of the cover.

Pierce the edges with round holes, through which must be laced narrow ribbon or fine cord of a suitable color fastening off at the top with bows or tassels.

The lacing must be done like that used for dresses, a series of little crosses, and must not be drawn up too tight, or it will prevent the cover from folding up when not in use, and the holes would split out.

Lamp shades may be made in the same way, but require more cards.

The difficulty with them is, however, that to make a shade for many shapes of lamps, the cards require narrowing in at the top, and it is a difficult matter to do this without encroaching on the designs of the cards.

The wonders of modern chemistry are apparent in the beautiful Diamond Dyes. All kinds and colors of ink can be made from them.

WINTER THOUGHTS.

BY E. R. LYTTON.

Where are the purple violets now?
And where the blossoms pink and white,
That load the orchard's tiptest bough,
With stores of sweet delight?
No robins in the chestnuts swing,
With merry flutings sounding loud;
No swallow round the low caves wing,
A blithe and busy crowd.

But far along the mountain side
The snow lies drifted cold and deep,—
Where meadow lands show low and wide,
Runs off its level sweep;
And bare gnarled boughs grotesquely toss
Against the gray-blue winter sky,
Where storm-winds surge he hills across,
And whistle fierce and high.

Far up the rocks the huge waves dash,
And roar defiance to the land;
Or, foam-crowned, meet with sullen crash
Along the sodden sand;
And showing darkly on the skies,
The gray gulls sweep on tireless wing,
And far and loud, their sharp, harsh cries
Through seaward valleys ring.

The great ship bends before the gale,
Their black sides wet with icy spray;
With straining mast and close-reefed sail,
They speed upon their way:
The sunlight glistens, thin and cold,
Across the white-clad, level plains,
The world has lost the drifting gold
Of Summer's fair domains.

Roar, winds, along the gleaming snow,
And wildly sweep the wintry sea,
No matter how your fugues may blow
They hold rich joy for me:
The ship will reach her port at last,
The sea-gulls find a sunlit main,
The blossom-fragrance freight the blast,
And robins sing again.

A VOLCANO'S BIRTH.

THE phenomena of volcanoes are among the most imposing and awe-inspiring within the circuit of natural influences. In the more poetic ages of the world, when men were disposed to personify those powers in nature that were beyond their comprehension or control, such volcanic outbreaks were attributed to causes in keeping with the modes of thought which then prevailed.

The volcanoes in the Mediterranean area were accounted for, in the picturesque mythology of the time, by supposing that the gods were then engaged in conflict or toil; the mountain of Vulcano, or Volcano, in the Lipari Islands, being appropriated as the forge of the Greek Hephaestus and his Roman representative Vulcan—and the name thus came to be applied to all similar phenomena.

Etna, again, was regarded as formed by the mountains which the vengeful Zeus had heaped over the rebellious Typhon, its periodically recurrent eruptions being ascribed to the tremendous struggles by which the buried giant sought to free himself from the superincumbent mass. But such poetical explanations have long since ceased to have weight among mankind.

A volcano is generally described as "a burning mountain, from the summit of which issue smoke and flame." This definition we take exception to, both as a whole and in its individual propositions. In the first place, the action which takes place at volcanoes is not external "burning," or combustion, and bears, indeed, no relation whatever to that well-known process. Nor are volcanoes necessarily "mountains" at all; essentially, they are just the reverse—namely, holes in the earth's crust, by means of which a communication is kept up between the surface and the interior of our globe.

Such, then, being some of the popular misconceptions of the cause and character of volcanic action, a more accurate conception may be obtained of what volcanoes are, if we have an opportunity of hearing from eye-witnesses how they are made. An interesting example of this operation has been afforded within the modern historical period. On the Bay of Naples, and about eighteen miles distant from Mount Vesuvius, is a conical hill four hundred and forty feet in height, and covering an area of more than half a mile in diameter. This is called the "New Mountain," and came into existence less than three hundred and fifty years ago, its sight having been anciently occupied in part by the Lucrine Lake. This continued till 1538, when the "New Mountain" was formed; and the the facts attending its formation have been conclusively proved. For more than two years previously the country around was affected by earthquakes, which gradually increased in intensity, and attained their climax in September of the year last mentioned.

"On the 27th and 28th of that month these earthquake shocks are said to have been felt almost continuously day and night. About 8 on the morning of the 29th a depression of the ground was noticed on the site of the future hill; and from this depression water, which was at first cold, and afterwards tepid, began to issue. Four hours afterwards the ground was seen to swell up and open, forming a fissure, within which incandescent matter was visible. From this fissure numerous masses of stone, some of them "as large as an ox," with vast quantities of pumice and mud, were thrown up to a great height, and these falling upon the sides of the vent, formed a great mound. This violent ejection of material continued for two days and nights, and on the third day a very considerable hill was seen to have been built up the falling fragments; and this hill was climbed by some of the eye-witnesses of the eruption. The next day the ejections were resumed, and many persons who had ventured on the hill were injured, and several killed by the falling stones. The latter ejections were, however, of less violence than the earlier ones, and seem to have died out on the seventh or eighth day after the beginning of the outburst. The great mass of this considerable hill would appear, according to the accounts which have been preserved, to have been built up by the materials which were ejected during the first two days and nights." This volcano is now quiescent, and the slopes of the hill are covered with thickets of stone-pine.

The circumstances attending the formation of this remarkable hill may be regarded as typical of what has taken place in the case of probably every centre of volcanic action that exists.

Grains of Gold.

Pain is the outcome of sin.

A good name is a rich inheritance.

To succeed, appear a fool and be a sage.

He who begins many things, finishes but few.

Wise counsel is wasted upon an angry man.

Man must become wise by his own experience.

Women, like princes, find few real friends.

Follow after holiness, it will repay your pursuit.

No decking sets anything forth so much as affection.

Nothing is so reasonable and cheap as good manners.

We give advice by the bucket and take it by the grain.

Adversity borrows its sharpest sting from our impatience.

The first and greatest of all faults is to defraud ourselves.

Temperance and labor are the two great physicians of man.

Wisdom is oftimes nearer when we stoop than when we soar.

It is not life to live for one's self alone; let us help one another.

To be angry is to revenge the faults of others upon ourselves.

Worth begets in base minds envy, in great minds emulation.

Youthful rashness skips like a hare over medes of good counsel.

Purpose—The force around which success compacts and crystallizes.

He who sees the end from the beginning will do only what is right.

The touchstone by which men try us is most often their own vanity.

The absent are never without fault, nor the present without excuses.

To the blessed eternity itself there is no other handle than this instant.

No accusation should be advanced except upon proof sufficient to sustain it.

He who can conceal his joy is greater than he who can conceal his griefs.

There is a relation between the words and the mouth which pronounces them.

No man's abilities are so shining as not to stand in need of proper opportunity.

Act well at the moment and you have performed a good action for all eternity.

But how is it possible that men will take warning when they will not even be advised?

To see and learn to see the wickedness of others is already the beginning of wickedness.

Take away ambition and vanity, and where will be many of your patriots and heroes?

Hate idleness, and curb all passions; be true in all words and actions; unnecessarily deliver not your opinion, but when you do, let it be just, well-considered and plain.

Femininities.

The tradesman who skins his customers can afford to seal-skin his wife.

One of man's duties is to take off his hat in a church or theatre; it ought to be one of woman's rights.

"Crushed strawberry" is a new color that will in all probability be worn by the creme de la creme.

At Salida, Mo., a woman won $20 on a bet that she could chop a cord of wood quicker than a certain man.

Miss Mary Belle Bartley, who has just become a bride at Staunton, Va., is thirteen years and ten months old.

The Suffrage Committee of the Massachusetts Legislature favor giving women the right to vote at municipal elections.

A Boston young lady of wealth and position has astonished "society" by cutting and making her own wedding dress.

The Czar of Russia has broken up the medical college for women at St. Petersburg—another instance of his reactionary course.

Four young ladies have died in Lexington, Ky., from fever produced by over-exertion at the roller-skating rink in that city.

Some genius has invented a machine to play pianos. This will give American girls a chance to help mother hang out the clothes on Monday afternoons.

A genuine American Indian, who is on exhibition in Berlin, is receiving lots of photographs and love-letters from the romantic young ladies of that city.

The women who believe everything that servant girls say of other families are the ones that don't expect any one to believe what their servants say of them.

A Chicago girl said that she could not remember the number of her shoes, and then got mad because some one said it was a good deal to tax one's memory with.

Emma Benson, an Indiana lass of eighteen, danced to such an excess at a masquerade ball that she ruptured a blood vessel in her lungs, dying five minutes later.

A Williamsport young lady was asked by her beau what she desired for Christmas. She said: "Call around for me Christmas morning and bring a minister with you."

When women have the ballot, a successful candidate must be gallant enough to say he was elected by a "handsome vote," no matter how small the majority may be.

A Syracuse young lady has a peculiar mode of reckoning time on Sunday. Last Sunday evening, about 9 o'clock, when asked the time, she replied, "Five minutes of Smith."

An old bachelor's maxim—As people sprinkle the floors before they wash them, so some ladies sprinkle their husbands with tears in order to sweep cash out of their pockets.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton advises billiards for girls. Elizabeth would nevertheless be shocked to see a girl come home with the front of her dress covered with chalk, and bearing an odor as of strong drink.

"Your husband is a staid man now, is he not?" asked a former schoolmate of her friend, who had married a man rather noted for his fast habits. "I think so," was the reply; "he stayed out all last night."

One of experience says there is probably no time in a woman's life more trying, or when she is more heavily laden with a sense of responsibility, than the first time she is left entirely alone with her first baby.

An Illinois court has decided that a woman's lie about her age doesn't vitiate her insurance policy. The judge thought that if they expected a woman to tell the truth on that point, they deserved to be swindled.

Chicago girls never go to the theatre with a young man without taking money enough along to buy tickets for both. Then, if the chap discovers that he has been "robbed" they don't have to walk about until the play is over.

A man who is happily married, and who believes in mothers-in-law, says the jokes about this much-abused class are generally concocted by some bald-headed old bachelor who is too mean to try the experiment of securing one. Just so.

They tell in San Francisco of a very wealthy woman who is remarkably strict in the discipline of her servants. She defends herself by saying that she was a servant until five years ago, and therefore knows all about both sides of the subject.

Why she prized it: "I wouldn't lose that rolling-pin for money!" exclaimed an Oshkosh woman, brandishing a chunk of wood that looked as though it had had a fight with a sausage-chopper. "Every time I lose a husband I put another notch in it."

A bride complained to her husband that she had been too busy all day to get off her feet once, and that unhappy man, who had already discovered several make-ups in her construction, exclaimed in amazement: "Great scott—and do they come off, too?"

Governor Butler's proposition to decide woman suffrage by a majority of the voters of the women themselves is characterized by a Boston clergyman, Rev. Dr. Bartol, as a descent from principle to expediency and a voting away of woman's rights.

A young woman of St. Louis sent out invitations for an elaborate reception, and just before her guests began to assemble she decided that she would be married that evening. A clergyman was sent for in haste, and the ceremony was performed between dances.

He delicately broached the subject as follows: "If I were to speak to you of marriage after having only made your acquaintance three days ago, what would you say to it?" "Well, I should say never put off till to-morrow that which you should have done day before yesterday."

News Notes.

Two-story street cars are a success in Berlin.

There are no services at the grave in Scotland.

The railways in the United States employ 1,800,000 persons.

Children's parties are growing to be very much in vogue in London.

In London plum-stones are bought up to be put into adulterated jams.

A six-legged lamb is one of the curiosities of Shenandoah county, Va.

Over 50,000,000 cans of tomatoes were put up in this country last year.

Women physicians have been refused permission to practice in Austria.

A lieutenant and twelve soldiers still guard the grave of President Garfield.

A French writer declares that the bravest and most courageous of men are those who eat sausage.

Miss Dickens, a grand-daughter of the great novelist, has gone upon the stage of the Princess Theatre.

Tobacco manufacturers buy licorice at fifteen cents a pound, and sell it as tobacco at three times that sum.

A returned missionary told a Toronto audience that English would be the language of China fifty years hence.

A Kentuckian who put a lighted pipe and some powder in the same pocket, is now done up in sweet oil and cotton.

The cultivation of rice in Louisiana affords a livelihood for 20,000 people, and the annual product is worth $8,250,000.

North Carolina has 40,000 square miles of almost unbroken forest, comprising pine, chestnut, oak, maple, beech and hickory.

Brown bread and butter is now served with raw oysters at the commencement of dinners given in imitation of the English style.

A Toronto seedsman has sent a large assortment of Canadian forest tree seeds to Germany. They are to be used in replenishing the German forests.

Several bills have been introduced in the Indiana Legislature making it obligatory for hotel-keepers to provide proper fire-escapes for every room.

A London youth wanted to marry a pretty actress until her mother demanded $25,000 from him for the loss she would incur by her daughter's withdrawal from the stage.

Billerica, in Massachusetts, has the proud distinction of being the only town of its name in the world. It has now 500 more inhabitants than it had in 1776, and is proud of its growth.

In the Clackamas, Oregon, paper mills, recently, rising water slaked a barrel of lime. The lime set fire to some paper, and the paper set fire to a barrel of rosin. A big fire followed.

A quarter of a century ago Mr. Newhall erected the hotel recently burned in Milwaukee. It cost $250,000. But the wheel of fortune has revolved, and to-day he is peddling milk in that city.

Prof. E. W. Gilliam has been calculating on the basis of the last five censuses, and finds that in 1985 the North will have 261,000,000 whites, and the South 96,000,000 whites and 122,000,000 blacks.

Sunflowers are no longer in vogue. Even Oscar Wilde repudiates them, and says they were never intended for ladies' corsages or for vases, but that growing in the garden they were truly beautiful.

An Australian court has to decide whether or not there is such a place as purgatory. A man who died left $7,000 to be expended in masses, and the executor refuses to pay the sum until satisfied that there is a purgatory.

The Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria evidently appreciates the value of good example. When the Postal Savings Bank system went into force in that country, on January 12, he had the first account-book issued to himself.

A new invention for building purposes is called "terra cotta lumber." It is a kind of brick so soft that it can be sawed and worked with edge tools as readily as wood, and nails can be driven into it and will hold as well as in wood.

A little black terrier at Americus, Ga., has quit his home and friends and joined a herd of goats. He sleeps with them, attends them in their rambles, plays with the kids, and does all he can to conform his manners to those of his new associates.

The most aged English baronet is, in all probability, the venerable Sir Moses Montefiore, who, on the 25th of October next, will enter upon his 100th year. Sir Henry Preston, a Scotch baronet, born in the year 1783, still survives. There at least twenty baronets living who were born before the commencement of the present century.

At Huntsville, Ala., a few days since, William Keagle, a farmer, was searching for his cows in the woods, when he was struck in the head by a striped snake which swung down from a limb in his path. The fangs of the reptile tore a piece from his cheek. He reached home in a terribly swollen condition, and died in a few hours.

Three German children, the eldest ten, started for their parents in this country with next to nothing but a little Testament given them by an aunt, inside the cover of which were written the names of the children, and underneath the words, "Christ says, 'Whatsoever ye do to one of these little ones ye have done it unto Me.'" They came through safely from Prussia to Illinois.

IF YOUR THROAT FEELS SORE AND UNCOMFORTABLE, use promptly Dr. Jayne's Expectorant. It will relieve the air-passages of all phlegm or mucous, allay inflammation, and so give affected parts a chance to heal. No safer remedy can be had for all Coughs and Colds, or any complaint of the Throat or Lungs, and a brief trial will prove its efficacy.

Frank's Jailer.

BY FRANK Q. SMITH.

GREY and ice-cold the twilight had darkened over the Stone Tower, until the ruddy glow of fire became insufficient to dispel the shadows, and Nannie brought in the lamp.

It was a great, low-ceilinged room, with an antique-carved cornice, and a wainscot of oak which reached above Nannie's fine shoulders—a room where the faded crimson hangings shut out the dying daylight, and the pattern of the carpet had long become indistinguishable.

And the three blooming, bright-eyed young girls in this ancient room seemed as much out of their element as a cluster of rosebuds would have been lying upon an Egyptian sarcophagus.

But Colonel Copely had seclusion and antiquity.

Moreover, he liked economy.

And when he brought his three motherless daughters down to the Stone Tower, he grimly gave them to understand that they too must teach themselves to like these three aspects of life.

"There's one thing," Colonel Copely, who was a man-hater, added to himself, they'll get no *beaux* here

"No girl ought to dream of a *beau* until she is twenty-five years old, at the very least."

Which was rather hard on Amy and Nannie, who were nineteen and seventeen, and had their pretty heads full of vague visions of love and lovers.

And even little Polly, the youngest, who had barely turned fifteen, had an imaginary ideal in her brain, with dark, melancholy eyes and brow like ivory, which she hoped one day might be realized in a suitor.

And upon this windy March night, when Colonel Copely was in town, and Miss Baird, the governess, was confined to her room with an attack of inflammatory rheumatism, Amy and Nannie were going to a surreptitious party.

"Of course papa wouldn't let us go if he were at home," said Amy.

"And we could not manage it if Miss Baird wasn't laid up, either," sagely added Nannie.

"But everything happens for the best," said Amy.

"Do look at this lovely gold-colored silk, Nan. Wasn't it good of Mary Sinclair to lend me the three dresses to choose from? I think I'll wear the gold-colored silk, with this black lace mantel."

"And I," said Nannie, who was plok and plump, with china-blue eyes and radiant bronze brown hair, "shall wear the white all brocaded over with pink rosebuds, and the rose-colored satin slippers.

"Oh, Amy, darling!"—pressing upon her sister with a little ecstatic kiss—"we shan't know ourselves!"

"Couldn't I go too?" pleaded Polly. "Couldn't I wear the pretty garnet silk that you've neither of you chosen?"

"Nonsense!" cried Amy. "You are only a child!"

"I shall be sixteen in nine months," said Polly. And I am almost as tall as you and Nannie. And I never was at a grown up party.

"Polly," said Nannie, in autocratic severity, "hold your tongue! You are to stay here, with Miss Baird——"

"But Miss Baird is always asleep in the evenings, Polly said.

"So much the better for you," pronounced Nannie.

"And mind you look after the house."

"The house won't run away," cried Polly, still rebellious.

"That isn't the question under discussion," said Amy. "Get the work-basket now, like a darling, and help us tuck up the dresses a little, for Mary Sinclair is at least half a head taller than we are. And there is no time to lose."

Polly drew a deep sigh and obeyed.

"Why was it," she argued within herself "that she must always be put down and snubbed and kept in the background, because she was the youngest, and wore short frocks and her hair braided in two Chinese tails down her back?

"If ever she was a grown-up young lady, she'd show them!"

But Polly got a little better natured when she was allowed to make cakes her ownself for tea in the absence of Mary Eliza, their sole domestic, whose brother had bethought himself to fall ill of fever, half-a-mile or so away, at this auspicious time, of all others, and to select a jar of raspberry jam, by way of accompaniment.

For Polly tall though she was, had not quite outgrown the age of tea-sets and delight in playing house keeper.

And she arranged her tea-rose buds in her sister's hair and gave the last dainty touch to their dresses—Polly was a born lady's maid, the girls declared—and looked regretfully after them, as, with their splendor all shrouded in black serge cloaks, they hurried down the frozen road, too merry, fleeting shadows.

"Oh dear," said Polly aloud, "how I do wish I was going, too!"

And she winked the tears down, and ran back into the oak-wainscoted room, where the lamp still glowed, and the logs still snapped on the hearth, so hurriedly that she never once remembered Amy's farewell caution as to locking and double-locking of the outer door.

Miss Baird was asleep, after her supper and her medicine.

There was no one going to her for companionship; for she snored and slept with her mouth open, and was not in the least an ideal slumberer.

And the kitchen was very lonesome without Mary Eliza, and even the cat was too drowsy to purr or frolic with a ball of knitting-yarn.

"What shall I do?" said Polly.

"Oh, I know! I'll try on the garnet silk dress, and I'll fancy I'm a grown-up young lady going to a ball!"

She was walking up and down the floor, trying to see herself in the old Venetian mirror that hung above the tall, wooden mantel, when the creaking of a board in the hall startled her.

Flying to the door, garnet silk, train and all, she came face to face with a man.'

"I beg your pardon!" he said apologetically; "but you did not hear the knock, and——"

"What do you want?" cried Polly, all in a panic.

"Go away, at once!"

"I called to see if the young ladies——"

Polly waited to hear no more.

Vague ideas of tramps, midnight assassins, floated through her brain.

"Yes," said she with assumed calmness, "they are at home. Please to walk in."

And opening the nearest door, she motioned him to enter.

And it was dark therein, how was he to know that it was the coal-cellar, or that the next minute the door would be shut and bolted upon him?

"There!" cried Polly exultantly, her dark eyes shining like balls of fire, her cheeks turned from deadly pale to glowing red all at once.

"But stop a minute!" cried a stifled voice, from the other side of the door.

"There's a mistake, I——"

"Yes," said Polly, "there is a mistake! Your are mistaken in supposing that I am to be imposed upon. Now, stay there until I call the coachman and the two stable men, and unloose the dog!"

(Which four last, be it understood, were entirely a fiction of Miss Polly's own imagination!)

She stood a second or so to consider.

Miss Baird must not be excited or disturbed—at least, so the doctor said.

Besides of what use could Miss Baird possibly be?

"I'll go for the girls," said Polly. "I'll be at the ball, after all!"

And folding a shawl about her pretty taper shoulders, away she shot, like an arrow, quite heedless of the lace-lined train of the garnet silk dress.

Hazel Hill, where the ball was being held was not more than a quarter of a mile from Stone Tower, and, lighted from garret to cellar, it presented a very pretty sight to Polly's wondering eyes.

She posted herself on the verandah, just where a casement had been opened to cool the perfumed atmosphere of the dancing-room and there, with big, sparkling eyes, and cherry cheeks, half hidden by the shawl drawn over head and ears, she watched to catch a glimpse of Amy or Nannie.

There they were dancing.

Polly would scarcely have known them, so radiant they seemed—their borrowed dresses set off by lights, their faces flushed by happy excitement—and at last Amy sat down by this very open casement, smiling and fanning herself, while her partner hurried to bring her a glass of iced champagne.

All of a sudden a cold little hand fell on her shoulder.

She started and looked around.

"Polly? Goodness me! It can't be possible!" she exclaimed. "What on earth has brought you here? Is Miss Baird dead? Has papa come home?"

"No," answered Polly, softly. "But I've caught a burglar! Call Nannie; and come home at once, because, maybe, he'll break loose."

And so Amy never got the iced champagne, and Nannie didn't finish her waltz with a whiskered young gentleman from town.

And Harry Sinclair, the brother of the hostess, accompanied them back to the tower, with the tallest of the waiters, two revolvers, and a blackthorn stick which would have done credit to Rory O'More himself.

Thus backed up, Polly drew the bolt, unlocked the door, and called, in stern accents, to the sequestered victim—

"Come out you villian—come at once!"

And a tall, rather pleasant looking young fellow emerged shivering with the cold, and having the traces of coal-dust on his white shirt collar and light kid gloves.

"Who are you?" savagely demanded Sinclair.

The gentleman presented his card.

"My name is Safford," he said. "Colonel Copely requested me to call here and bring his daughter back to London with me. Here is a letter from him. He has taken a furnished house in Bond Street, and——"

"Goodness me!" cried Polly, clasping her hands over her eyes. "And I shut him in the coal-cellar!"

For one dread second there was silence, and then they all burst into a peal of laughter, which broke up all ceremony at once, and rendered them all good friends.

Mr. Sinclair, with the tall waiter and the blackthorn stick, departed, and Polly, with a little of Nanie's amateur assistance served up an impromptu supper of bread and some toasted cheese, which was pronounced a success.

Mary Eliza returned in a little while, and all was well.

The next day commenced the packing for removal.

Mary Eliza was to remain in the Stone Tower until Miss Baird's convalescence, and the three girls returned to London with Mr. Stafford.

And Frank Stafford, strange to say, appeared to have no malice against his fair little jailer.

"On the contrary," said the shrewd Amy, as the season advanced. "I do believe he likes Polly the best of us all, or he would do so if she wasn't such a child."

"But she's growing older every day," said Nannie.

"And prettier," added Amy, with a little laugh.

So that, as the two sisters agreed, there was no telling what might happen one of these days.

But if they venture to question Polly herself, she only laughs and blushes, and hides her face.

"Because, you know I'm not a grown up woman yet," says Polly.

New Publications.

"La Belle Lisa; or, The Paris Market Girls," by Emile Zola, is considered by the author as his best work, and it is without a doubt a very remarkable novel, full of power and overflowing with interest The scene is laid in Paris, and the action takes place mainly in and around the Halles or great markets of the city. La Belle Lisa is the sister of Gervaise, the heroine of "L'Assommoir," but, unlike her, is prosperous and quite a beauty. Peterson & Bros., publishers. Price, 75 cents.

"The Countess of Rudolstadt," by George Sand, is the sequel to "Consuelo." It is fully equal to its great predecessors in every point of view. The thousands who read "Consuelo" will want to follow up the delightful narrative in the Countess of Rudolstadt, "all who can afford ought to purchase it, as the present superior and unabridged edition is issued at the exceedingly low price of seventy-five cents.

We have received advance sheets of Theodore Tilton's new edition of his famous novel, "Tempest Tossed." Every one will remember the excitement this story produced upon its first appearance, and there is no reason for doubting that it will have as great a success in its new form. Mr. Tilton is a picturesque writer, and the fact that his novel is suffered to be somewhat autobiographical will not detract from its interest. Peterson & Bros., publishers, this city.

MAGAZINES.

The contents of Lippincott's *Magazine* for March are unusually varied, and include several articles of special interest. Professor James D. Butler has an apparently exhaustive paper on the Portraits of Columbus. Invalid Life in the South sums up the experience of five years spent in the recovery of health. The Civilized Indian, by Alfred M. Williams, gives an account of the Cherokee Nation. An Ocean Swordsman, is the title of an illustrated paper by C. Holder, combining a lively narrative of personal adventure with solid and quasi-scientific information. The Story of the Palatines, by Charles Burr Todd, brings to light a forgotten episode in the history of American colonization. The new instalment of The Jewel in the Lotos, by Mary Agnes Tincker, contains some striking scenes and exquisite descriptions. Among the short stories, Carita, by G. H. Pierce, is a very graceful and pathetic sketch, while The Fiddler of Batiscan, by Annie Robertson Macfarlane, is romantic and sensational, and the Stirring-Off, by H. R. Catherwood, is a bit of homely realism. The poetry of the number is by Carlotta Perry, Marion Couthouy, and Charles L. Hildreth, and the Monthly Gossip includes several timely papers, most of them biographical and anecdotical.

In the *Magazine of Art*, America has a publication it may well be proud of. The March issue is fully up to the mark of its predecessors, which is the highest praise. Almost every article is magnificently illustrated with numerous full-page and other engravings. Among them are: Prince Edward and his Whipping Boy; Horses and Dogs; An American Palace, the residence of W. H. Vanderbilt; For Auld Lang Syne; Greek Myths in Greek Art; St. Paul's Cathedral; My Model; The Special Artist, etc., etc. Cassell, Petter & Galpin, New York, publishers. Price, 35 cents.

Arthur's *Home Magazine* for March is, as usual, full of the very best of matter. The literary matter is excellent, and the various departments are overflowing with useful hints, etc. Arthur & Son, publishers, 227 S. 6th street, Philadelphia.

The *Sanitarian*, which is now published weekly at the price of ten cents per number, is a journal that all physicians should have. Every issue is filled with the best of matter. Bell & Co., publishers, 113 Fulton St., New York.

As usual Vick's *Illustrated Floral Monthly* magazine is the pink of perfection. It could not possibly be better in any respect, and all interested in gardens or flowers in any way should have it. James Vick, Rochester, New York. Price, $1.25 a year.

The *Public Ledger* Almanac for 1883, like all its predecessors, is a perfect mine of useful information. It is furnished free to all subscribers to that paper.

We have received Bulst's Almanac and Garden Manual for 1883. It will be found useful to the farmer and gardener. Published 923 Market St., Philadelphia.

MUSIC.

The January number of Brainard's *Musical World* is exceptionally rich in interesting and valuable matter to all any way concerned with music. It also contains four pieces of fine music. Brainard's Sons, publishers, Cleveland. Subscription, $1.50 a year.

"Presenting the Bride" Heard From

Brownwood, Tex., Feb. 2, '83.

Editor Post—I received the picture, "Presenting the Bride," in due time, and all who have seen it are delighted with it. You may look for some subscribers from me shortly, as many of my friends expressed a desire to subscribe, and how could they feel otherwise, with such a paper, and such a premium!

B. B

Yoncolla, Ore., Feb. 8, '83.

Editor Post—Your premium, "Presenting the Bride," came to hand all right. I cannot find language to express my thanks to you for the beautiful premium. I have received many premiums, but yours leads them all. Will send some subscriptions soon.

J. A.

Dubois, Iowa, Feb. 8, '83.

Editor Post—Your premium, "Presenting the Bride," is indeed a beautiful gift of art, and cannot fail to please the most fastidious. Many thanks.

S. R. S.

Milan, Kans., Feb 3, '83.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—Your premium picture, "Presenting the Bride," was duly received, and am more than pleased with it. It is by far the handsomest picture I ever saw.

J. P. S.

Brownsville, Minn., Feb 8, '83.

Editor Post—The picture premium, "Presenting the Bride," received. It is beautiful, and I am very much pleased with it. All who have seen the picture think it is just superb. Expect to get you numerous subscribers in a few days.

A. E. C.

Philadelphia, Mo., Feb. 7, '83.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—The picture, "Presenting the Bride," has come to hand, and in good condition. I am much pleased with it, indeed. I have shown it to some of my neighbors, and they all unite with me in voting it beautiful. Will send you some subscribers soon.

M. E. S.

Hoxie, Tex., Feb. 5, 83,

Editor Post—Have received my picture, "Presenting the Bride," and was surprised at its marvelous beauty. I am well pleased with it. I have shown it to several of my friends, and all say it is the handsomest and most valuable premium they ever saw.

J. M.

Roanoke, Va., Feb. 2, '82.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—My beautiful premium Photo-Oleograph, "Presenting the Bride," came duly to hand, and it is even better than you claimed it to be. I will see what I can do for you in the way of new subscribers.

B. D.

Dallas, O., Feb. 6, '83.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—Your magnificent premium picture, "Presenting the Bride," at hand, and think it very beautiful. I am greatly pleased with it, and thank you very much for a real a beautiful present. I have shown it to quite a number of people, and they all say it is the prettiest and richest premium they have ever had the pleasure of beholding. Will do all that lies in my power to increase your subscription list.

K. B.

Plattsburg, Mo., Feb. 2, '82.

Editor Post—I have received premium, "Presenting the Bride." It far surpasses my most sanguine expectations—perfectly lovely! Will get some subscribers for you.

J. J. B.

Stockbridge, Wis., Feb. 4, '83.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—I received the beautiful picture, "Presenting the Bride," in due time, and am very much pleased with it. It is far ahead of my most sanguine expectations. Shall see what I can do for you in the way of subscribers.

H. J. M.

Timberville, Va., Feb. 3, '83.

Editor Post—"Presenting the Bride" was delivered to me yesterday, and am highly pleased with it. We consider it a gem. Have given it a conspicuous place in our gallery for the inspection of our friends.

S. K. V.

St. Charles, Minn., Feb. 5, '82.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—Paper and premium received. THE POST is a splendid literary journal. And the picture is very handsome. Am greatly pleased with it. Everyone who has seen the picture considers it grand.

G. W. B.

Springfield, O., Feb. 6, '82.

Editors Post—I received my premium for The Post, for which accept thanks. It is the most beautiful premium I ever saw.

C. H. W.

Fort Valley, Ga., Feb. 9, '82.

Editor Post—I received your premium picture yesterday all sound, and am very much pleased with it. It is far ahead of the premiums usually offered by newspapers, and certainly ought to bring you many subscribers. Am quite proud of it.

M. F. C.

Bee Creek, Ill., Feb. 3, '82

Editor Post—I received my Photo-Oleograph, "Presenting the Bride," and think it very beautiful. Had it framed and hung up two hours after its arrival. It is admired by everybody.

R. M.

Sweetwater, Ill, Feb. 7, '82.

Editor Post—I received my premium last night, and think it very beautiful. I will with pleasure aid you in raising your subscription list, and I think I can get a great many subscribers for you.

J. W. P.

McPaul, Iowa, Dec. 3, '82.

Editor Post—The premium picture, "Presenting the Bride" received, and I consider it grand. I have shown it to several of my friends, and each and every one of them pronounce it beautiful.

E. M. C.

REVENGEFUL ANIMALS.

WHILE it must be conceded that animals possess most of man's good qualities, it cannot be denied that they share many of his faults. Animals cherish ideas of revenge with almost human tenacity, and appear to believe thoroughly in the proverb that declares it to be sweet.

There have been occasions when this long-cherished idea of revenge has been gratified in a serious manner. The Rev. John Watson, in his highly suggestive work on the "Reasoning Power in Animals," alludes to the following tragic occurrence, that happened at St. Cloud, in the neighborhood of Paris. A large Newfoundland dog was kept tied up during the hot weather, and every morning a servant-maid, as she passed, thinking to do it a kindness, threw a quantity of water over the animal. The dog appeared to consider this daily deluge as an insult, but, being tied up, was of course unable to manifest its resentment. One day, however, the brute was released, and no sooner did the unfortunate servant present herself than it sprang at her with great ferocity, and before she could be rescued, killed her.

It has already been seen that dogs will try to avenge themselves upon human beings as well as upon animals; while the instances on record where they have inflicted punishment upon other dogs are very numerous. In his "Encyclopædia of Rural Sports," Blaine furnishes the following anecdote: "I had in my kitchen," says a certain Duke, "two turnspits, one of which went regularly every other day into the wheel. One of them, however, not liking his employment, hid himself on the day on which he should have worked so that his companion was ordered to enter the wheel in his stead. But the dog hung back, crying and wagging his tail, and making signs for those present to follow him. Being curious to see what he would do, they put themselves under his guidance; he led them straight to a garret where the idle dog was hid, and immediately fell upon him and killed him on the spot." In this case it can hardly be considered that the dog was prudent in the revenge he took—although, for the matter of that, human beings rarely are—as he probably had, for a time at least, to take the place of his companion at the wheel.

In a somewhat similar anecdote by Jesse, the injured brute acted with more forethought. On one occasion—so goes the story—when the cook at the Jesuits' College at La Fleche required the spit turned, the dog that should have been on duty was nowhere to be found, and when the man would have employed another, it bit at him and ran away. In a little while, however, this latter animal reappeared, driving before him the one that would have evaded his duty, which he forced to enter the wheel and go on with his work.

Anecdotes of the dignified, and even magnanimous, way in which large dogs avenge themselves for insults upon smaller members of their species are exceedingly numerous, and generally too well known for citation here. Dr. Hancock, in his "Essay on Instinct," alluding to one of these instances, which a Newfoundland dog dropped a troublesome cur into a quarry, and then, when it was struggling for life, plunged in and saved it, remarks "that it would be difficult to conceive any punishment more aptly contrived or more complete in character;" adding, that "if it were fully analyzed, an ample commentary might be written in order to show what a variety of comparisons, motive and generous feeling entered into the composition of this act."

A very interesting instance of the sagacity with which these Newfoundland dogs act, and the way in which they retain their resentment, is afforded by Mr. Watson. He tells how a gentleman on arriving at his country-house, in the neighborhood of London, discovered that he had brought with him a key that would be needed during his absence. He had with him a Newfoundland dog that was accustomed to carry things, and to it he entrusted the key. On its way to the town with the key the poor creature was attacked by a butcher's dog, but attempted no resistance, and only used its powers to get off with its charge. It delivered the key safely; and then on its way home stopped deliberately before the butcher's shop until the dog again came forth, when he attacked it furiously, and did not leave off until he had killed it.

Useless Fright.

To worry about any Liver, Kidney or Urinary Trouble, especially Bright's Disease or Diabetes, as Hop Bitters never fails of a cure where a cure is possible. We know this.

THE SEA.

She was rich and of high degree,
A poor and unknown artist he.
"Paint me," she said, "a view of the sea."

So he painted the sea as it looked the day
That Aphrodite rose from its spray.
And it broke, as she gazed on its face the while,
Into its countless dimpled smile.
"What a poky, stupid picture!" said she,
"I don't believe he can paint the sea."

Then he painted a raging, tossing sea,
Storming, with fierce and sudden shock,
Wild cries, with writhing tongues of foam,
A towering, mighty fortress rock,
In its sides above the leaping crests
The thronging sea-birds built their nests.
"What a disagreeable daub!" said she:
"Why, it isn't anything like the sea!"

Then he painted a sketch of a hot, brown sand,
With a big hotel on either hand;
And a handsome pavilion for the band—
Not a sign of water to be seen
Except one little streak of green.
"What a perfectly exquisite picture," said she,
"It's the very image of the sea!"

—S. T. OLEN.

Facetiæ.

A piece of steel is a good deal like a man; when you get it red-hot it loses its temper.

The presiding officer of a caucus is called the chair, because everybody likes to sit down on him.

Judge—"What I cannot understand is how you could kill a man with a single blow." Culprit—"Shall I show you how?"

"Have some oil on your hair?" said a barber to a customer. "No; I've quit it altogether." "Oil right," was the fiendish reply.

A Missouri man, with an in-growing nail, chopped his toe off. The remedy never fails. For sale at all hardware stores. Beware of imitations.

The Irish papers, in describing a late duel at Waterford, say that one of the combatants was shot through the fleshy part of the thigh-bone.

A bald-headed man, who had heard that the hairs of a man's head are numbered, wants to know if there is not some place where he can obtain the back numbers.

A man who crossed the Atlantic for the first time, said he did not think he was much of a sailor at starting, but when he was one day out he felt as if he could heave up the anchor.

A gentleman was talking to the owner of a ferocious bull dog, and asked him if the dog could become fond of a stranger. The dog master replied that he would if the stranger was raw, but not if he was cooked.

"Do you know what church your next-door neighbor attends?" inquired a friend of an uptown man. "No, I do not; but I'm sure he's a Christian, because he sprinkles ashes on his sidewalk when it's slippery."

"Do you believe that a woman, now-a-days, would die for the object of her love?" asked a bachelor friend. "I don't know whether she'd die or not," answered the Benedick, "but I've known her to go wild when the trimming didn't exactly suit her."

A horse-dealer, who effected a sale, was offered a bottle of porter to confess the animal's failings. The porter was drank, and then he said the horse had two faults. When turned out in a field he was bad to catch, and he was of no use when he was caught.

An Irishman, who had been contending that a mule was a nobler animal than a horse, said that a mule had once saved his life. "How was that?" asked one of the bystanders. "Faith he gev me sich a tick wid his hoind leg that he landed me on the other side of a canawl instid of in it."

You can't fool a Camden girl. When her beau rises from his theatre seat between acts and says he'll be back in a moment, she dazzles him with one of her most reliable smiles, and pulling him back with the remark, "I brought some with me," coyly slips into his hand a pinch of cloves or roasted coffee.

An exchange excitedly asks: "Is your canary savage?" And then it proceeds to give a recipe for taming the canary. It is fortunate that even at this late day means have been discovered for taming a savage canary; and now there will be no more blood-curdling anecdotes about canary birds carrying off children and devouring them.

Culinary item: Scrambled snakes' eggs are the new dish; and as yet there seems to be no particular directions in the cook-books for preparing them. We would suggest, however, that you go out into the country until you find a nest with eggs, and then, when the snake puts in an appearance, it will come natural for you to scramble some.

A bill has been introduced into the Legislature of Texas to punish by fine the use of "profane or vociferous language in the vicinity of a dwelling-house." Maybe the author thinks a man is going to get up in the middle of a cold night, when the bed-clothes get tucked at the foot, and go half a mile out on the prairie to free his mind of certain things concerning the event.

A California man, coming home in the night recently, stumbled over something furry in the hall. With rare presence of mind he did not give the alarm, but crept round the animal, which he judged was a bear, got his shotgun and fired the contents of two barrels into the beast. That awoke his wife and gave her hysterics, and when he got a light and took account of results, he found that he had shot his bearskin coat all to pieces.

Superfluous Hair.

Madame Wambold's Specific permanently removes Superfluous Hair without injuring the skin. Send for circular. Madame WAMBOLD, 24 Sawyer Street, Boston, Mass.

A MEETING of the stockholders of *Our Continent* Publishing Company will be held at the office of said Company, in the city of Philadelphia on the twenty-sixth day of March, 1883, to elect officers and vote upon an increase and preference of stock.
By order of the Board of Directors.
Jan. 22, 1883. H. W. B. HOWARD, Sec'y.

☞ When our readers answer any Advertisement found in these columns they will confer a favor on the Publisher and the advertiser by naming the Saturday Evening Post.

THE MILD POWER
CURES
HUMPHREYS HOMEOPATHIC SPECIFICS
In use twenty years. The most safe, simple, economical and efficient medicine known. Dr. Humphreys' Book on Disease and its Cure (144 pp.) also Illustrated Catalogue sent free. Humphreys Homeopathic Medicine Co., 109 Fulton St., New York

KIDNEY-WORT
Acts at the Same Time on Kidneys, Liver and Bowels.
HAS BEEN PROVED
The SUREST CURE for
KIDNEY DISEASES.
Does a lame back or disordered urine indicate that you are a victim? THEN DO NOT HESITATE; use Kidney-Wort at once. (Druggists recommend it) and it will speedily overcome the disease and restore healthy action.
Ladies. For complaints peculiar to your sex, such as pain and weakness, Kidney-Wort is unsurpassed, as it will act promptly and safely.
Either Sex. Incontinence, retention of urine, brick dust or ropy deposits, and dull dragging pains, all speedily yield to its curative power.
☞ SOLD BY ALL DRUGGISTS. Price $1.
KIDNEY-WORT

A well-known clergyman, Rev. N. Cook, of Trempeleau, Wis., says: "I find Kidney-Wort a sure cure for kidney and liver troubles."

KIDNEY-WORT
IS A SURE CURE
for all diseases of the Kidneys and
—LIVER—
It has specific action on this most important organ, enabling it to throw off torpidity and inaction, stimulating the healthy secretion of the bile, and by keeping the bowels in free condition, effecting its regular discharge.
Malaria. If you are suffering from malaria, have the chills, are bilious, dyspeptic, or constipated, Kidney-Wort will surely relieve and quickly cure.
In the Spring to cleanse the System, every one should take a thorough course of it.
☞ SOLD BY DRUGGISTS. Price $1.
KIDNEY-WORT

"Last year I went to Europe," says Henry Ward, late Col. 69th Reg., N. G. S. N. Y., now living at 173 W. 58th Ave., J. C. Heights, N. J., "only to return worse from chronic liver complaint. Kidney-Wort, as a last resort, has given me better health than I've heretofore enjoyed for many, many years." He is cured now, and consequently happy.

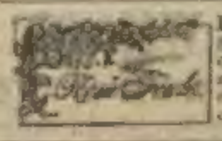
KIDNEY-WORT
Acts at the Same Time on Kidneys, Liver and Bowels.
FOR THE PERMANENT CURE OF
CONSTIPATION.
No other disease is so prevalent in this country as Constipation, and no remedy has ever equalled the celebrated Kidney-Wort as a cure. Whatever the cause, however obstinate the case, this remedy will overcome it.
PILES. This distressing complaint is very apt to be complicated with constipation. Kidney-Wort strengthens the weakened parts and quickly cures all kinds of Piles even when physicians and medicines have before failed.
☞ If you have either of these troubles
PRICE $1. USE Druggists Sell
KIDNEY-WORT

"I will recommend it everywhere," writes Jas. B. Moyer, carriage manufacturer, Myerstown, Pa., "because it"—Kidney-Wort—"cured my piles."

KIDNEY-WORT
Acts at the Same Time on Kidneys, Liver and Bowels.
THE GREAT CURE
FOR
—RHEUMATISM—
As it is for all the painful diseases of the
KIDNEYS, LIVER AND BOWELS.
It cleanses the system of the acrid poison that causes the dreadful suffering which only the victims of Rheumatism can realize.
THOUSANDS OF CASES
of the worst forms of this terrible disease have been quickly relieved, and in short time
PERFECTLY CURED.
PRICE, $1. LIQUID OR DRY, SOLD BY DRUGGISTS.
☞ Dry can be sent by mail.
WELLS, RICHARDSON & Co., Burlington Vt.
KIDNEY-WORT

"Mr. Walter Cross, my customer, was prostrated with rheumatism for two years; tried, in vain, all remedies; Kidney-Wort alone cured him. I have tried it myself, and know that it is good."—Portion of a letter from J. L. Willett, Flint, Mich.

MONEY $10 in Genuine C Paper Money and 60 of the most valuable Secret Recipes known, all for 25 cents; or Recipes and $5 C Money for 75 cents. Now is your chance. No postals. Address,
E. W. CALLENDER, Nashua, Iowa.


Bevel Edge Cards, design for 1884. Send 10c. for 60 Chromo Cards with name. Latest yet. Agents say: "Your cards sell best." Large Sample Book and $75 outfit 10c. Quickest returns. Cost of a trial order. Clinton & Co. North Haven, Ct.

SILK PATCHWORK made easy. Blocks of all kinds in 100 Elegant styles. Send 4 2c. stamps for Samples. Gem Silk Co., New Haven, Ct.

40 HORSESHOE, HAND and BOQUET, CHROMO CARDS, Name on, 10 cents.
C. W. BROOKS, Jamaica, Vermont.

40 CARDS all lap-corner, Gilt Edge, Glass, Motto and Chromo, Love-letter and Case, name in gold and jet, 10 cents. WEST & CO., Westville, Conn.

60 Gold Edge Chromo and fine Visiting Cards, no 2 alike, name on 12c. E. HALL & CO., Meriden, Ct.

Landreth's Earliest Cabbage
Ten days earlier than any other cabbage, and producing well-formed conical heads remarkably large size for so early a ripener. Whoever plants it will be amazed at its early maturity; and if he be a market-gardener, will be able to place it in the market ahead of all competitors.
We have reports of this variety reaching ten pounds in weight, remarkable considering its extreme earliness.
LANDRETH'S RURAL REGISTER AND ALMANAC, containing full catalogue of Landreth's Celebrated Garden, Field, and Flower seeds, with directions for culture in English and German. Also, catalogue of implements and tools, free of charge.
Price lists, wholesale and retail, furnished upon application. Landreth's seeds are in sealed packages, with name and full directions for culture.
D. LANDRETH & SONS,
Nos. 21 and 23 South Sixth Street, between Market and Chestnut Streets, and Delaware Avenue and Arch Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

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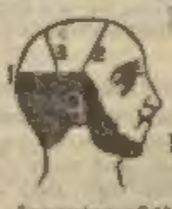
A VALUABLE GIFT!

The publisher of the well known and popular Literary and Family paper, The Cricket on the Hearth, wishing to secure 100,000 new subscribers for the next three months, and believing that all who so subscribe will be so delighted with the paper that they will thereafter renew their subscription, now make the following unprecedented offer: Upon receipt of only Twenty-Seven Cents in postage stamps, we will send The Cricket on the Hearth for Three Months, and to every subscriber we will send Free a copy of the Reliable Illustrated Dictionary of the English Language, one of the most valuable and useful premiums ever offered. This valuable book is handsomely bound in cloth, and is a complete and thoroughly reliable dictionary of the English language. It contains upwards of 30,000 words, with orthography, pronunciation, and definitions according to the best English and American lexicographers, and likewise has fully 700 illustrations. It is a book that should be in every household, and to those who cannot afford a $12.00 Webster, it answers every purpose. The CRICKET ON THE HEARTH is a sixteenth 16-page, 64-column illustrated paper, filled with charming Serial and Short Stories, Sketches, Poems, Useful Knowledge, Farm and Household Hints and Recipes, Puzzles, Games and Stories for the Young, Wit and Humor, and everything to amuse, entertain and instruct the whole family. You will be delighted with it, as well as with the valuable premium we offer. Remember, we send this splendid Dictionary free to all sending 27 cents for a three months' subscription to our paper. Five subscriptions and five Dictionaries will be sent for $1.00; therefore by getting four of your friends to send with you, you will get your own paper and premium free. This great offer is made solely to introduce our paper; take advantage of it at once. Satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded. As to our reliability, we refer to any newspaper in New York. Address S. H. MOORE, Publisher, No. 3 Park Place, New York.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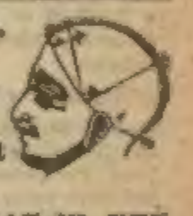
Inventor of the celebrated GOSSAMER VENTILATING WIG and ELASTIC BAND TOUPEE.
Instructions to enable Ladies and Gentlemen to measure their own heads with accuracy:

FOR WIGS, INCHES.	TOUPEES AND SCALPS, INCHES.
No. 1. The round of the head.	No. 1. From forehead back as far as bald.
No. 2. From forehead over the head to neck.	No. 2. Over forehead as required.
No. 3. From ear to ear over the top.	No. 3. Over the crown of the head.
No. 4. From ear to ear round the forehead.	

He has always ready for sale a splendid Stock of Gents' Wigs, Toupees, Ladies' Wigs, Half Wigs, Frizettes, Braids, Curls, etc., beautifully manufactured, and as cheap as any establishment in the Union. Letters from any part of the world will receive attention.
Private rooms for Dyeing Ladies' and Gentlemen's Hair.

SWAYNE'S OINTMENT
THE GOOD CURE FOR ITCHING PILES
Symptoms and Cure.
The symptoms are, moisture, like perspiration, intense itching, increased by scratching, very distressing, particularly at night; seems as if pin-worms were crawling in and about the rectum; the private parts are sometimes affected. If allowed to continue, very serious results may follow. "SWAYNE'S OINTMENT" is a pleasant, sure cure. Also for Tetter, Itch, Salt Rheum, Scald Head, Erysipelas, Barbers' Itch, Blotches, all scaly, crusty Skin Diseases. Sent by mail for 50 cents; three boxes, $1.25, (in stamps). Address DR. SWAYNE & SON, Philadelphia, Pa. Sold by all Druggists.

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The ONLY Book of the kind over pub'd
NEW EDITION, A HISTORY of every Administration from Washington to the present time, with over 20 Steel Portraits of Ladies of the White House, with views of many of the homes of the Presidents. This is the most salable book published. Agents Wanted—Send for Circulars, with full particulars, to
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WORTH SENDING FOR
Dr. J. H. Schenck has just published a book on the DISEASES OF THE LUNGS and HOW THEY CAN BE CURED, which he offers to send free, post paid, to all applicants. It contains valuable information for all who suppose themselves afflicted with, or liable to, any disease of the throat or lungs. Address
DR. J. H. SCHENCK & SON, Philadelphia.

The Album Writer's Friend,
Containing 300 Choice Gems of Poetry and Prose suitable for writing in Autograph Albums. Something that everybody wants. 64 pages, paper covers, 15 cents; cloth, 30 cents. Stamps taken. Address,
J. S. OGILVIE & CO.,
31 Rose St., New York.

WEAR BOSS PATENT GOLD WATCH CASE PROTECTION ECONOMY

50 Chromo Cards, best in the market, with name 10c. "Beautiful Decalcomanie Album" with 150 Pictures, 25 cents; 5 for $1.00.
CARD CO., Cheshire, Conn.

50 All New chromo Cards for '83, name on 10c, or 40 Gold and Silver 15c. J. B. Husted, Nassau, N. Y.

Correspondence.

CLARA, (Trenton, N. J.)—You can get it in any stationery store.

INQUIRER.—No reduction in rates on account of not taking premium. See page 8.

MASONRY, (Phila., Pa.)—Make inquiry at any shop where they sell artist's materials.

SAILOR, (Sussex, N. J.)—Your own good sense should tell you how long and how often it is good for you to exercise with dumb-bells each day. We cannot tell in your case without knowing more about you. You do not say whether you are tall or short, stout or thin, robust or weakly. Eight pound bells are quite heavy enough to begin with.

ORDELL, (Jefferson, Mis.)—You could learn shorthand from a book, but not telegraphy. To be a good reporter or a good telegraph operator one should have at least a fair English education. As a rule, a reporter needs a better education and more general intelligence than a telegraph operator requires.

MILORD, (Hendricks, Ill.)—Wet some pieces of coarse sponge with sweetened water and put them in the places where the ants "most do congregate." The cells of the sponge will soon be filled with the ants. Then put the pieces of sponge in hot water till the ants in them are killed. Keep on repeating the operation until all the ants are destroyed.

N. V., (Phila., Pa.)—Etiquette does not require one to stop in the streets to speak to every friend one meets. Your best plan is to let the matter pass until you have some opportunity of good-humoredly talking the matter over with your friend, when you will probably find that he was piqued about something you had said or done, and took that rather silly way of showing his displeasure.

PHILIP, (Snyder, Pa.)—1. Because, Phœnix No. 1, after living five hundred years, gathered wood for a funeral pile, lit the fire by the fanning of its wings, and out of the flames came Phœnix No. 2, regarding whom you inquire. 2. It is said that the proverb, "Robbing Peter to pay Paul," arose from St. Peter's Abbey, Westminster, being given to St. Paul's Cathedral, and its wealth laid out on the latter, in the sixteenth century.

ZITZKA, (Albany, N. Y.)—Of course the young lady is right, as is usual in disputes between her sex and the opposite one. Two teaspoonsful would mean two separate teaspoons each full. Teaspoonful is an English word, and its plural is teaspoonfuls. If our reasoning does not satisfy you, we can refer you to "Webster Unabridged," which, however, is not either as handy, or as trustworthy a method of settling such a question, as is a little thinking about the real meaning of the two words involved.

TOOTS, (La Fayette, Min.)—Bashfulness in a great many cases proceeds from thinking too much about yourself and the impression you are making. Frequent the society of ladies, and when you are with them do not think of what they may be thinking of you, or try to appear any wittier or better than you really are. Remember that half the awkward things you do or say are unnoticed by anyone but yourself, and the other half will be forgotten by everyone but the unfortunate "Toots" who blushes up to the ears when he thinks of them.

JENNIE, (Knox, Mo.)—We think the young lady's acquaintances are exceedingly impertinent and meddlesome, and if the young lady has proper spirit she will tell them to mind their own affairs. Of course a difference in age of eighteen years is an objection to a match, but not at all an insuperable or even a serious one. But a young lady is running a terrible risk of future unhappiness, and of losing what is best in life, if she marries a man because he can give her "a good living," or for any other reason than that she esteems and trusts him, believes that he loves her, and loves him in return.

W. S. W., (Wabash, Ind.)—If you have so strong a taste for theatricals as you say, by all means do all you can to carry out your determination. But first of all let us strongly advise you to make no step towards leaving your trade at present. Finish your apprenticeship; learn your business thoroughly; and, if you should fail as an actor (as many a gifted man has done and will again), you will still be able to avoid very serious results, for you can support yourself by tailoring. But the mere fact of your liking to attend plays is no proof that you are endowed with those numerous natural qualifications which alone can enable you to rise above the common herd of actors.

ALICE, (Clarke, Iowa.)—Our advice to you is to think as little as possible about yourself and the impression you make; to cultivate the society of other girls, join in their pursuits and amusements, and let us mention, as a minor reform, look up in a dictionary the meaning of "congeal" and "congealed," and never again use words of whose meaning you are not quite sure. Perhaps in this way, even if you do not win the love of a "strong nature," or of "an ideal of manhood," you may become worthy to be the wife of some honest man, who can make you happy, and whom you can make happy in return, and be a helpmeet to him in the original and best sense of the word.

N. A. D., (Taylor, W. Va.)—The great French historian, Thiers, says that in war Napoleon was governed by his genius, and in politics by his passions. When he set out on a campaign, he did not allow his personal feelings to interfere with his operations. He then acted from cold intellectual perceptions, and selected his subordinate commanders solely with a view to their ability and fidelity; but in his political affairs he allowed his personal feelings to govern him, and would appoint men to office who were neither able or faithful. He would also do things in a rage which would sometimes so complicate his diplomatic relations with other governments as to render the mischief irreparable.

M. I., (Kent, Md.)—There is no rule on the subject. When you are writing a letter that is likely to take up more than two pages, it is best to write on the first, second, third, and fourth pages in the order in which they come. The only reason for turning from the first page to the third, is that some people are so careless as never to have a piece of blotting paper at hand, and instead of waiting for the first page to dry, they turn to the third. Some business letters are begun on the fourth page and continued on the first. This gives the letter on one side of the sheet, and is convenient in taking letterpress copies. The better plan for such letters is to use single sheets. You can have two sizes, a large sheet for long letters, and a small sheet for the shorter.

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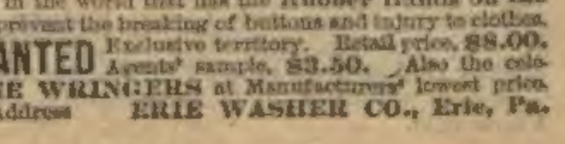
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